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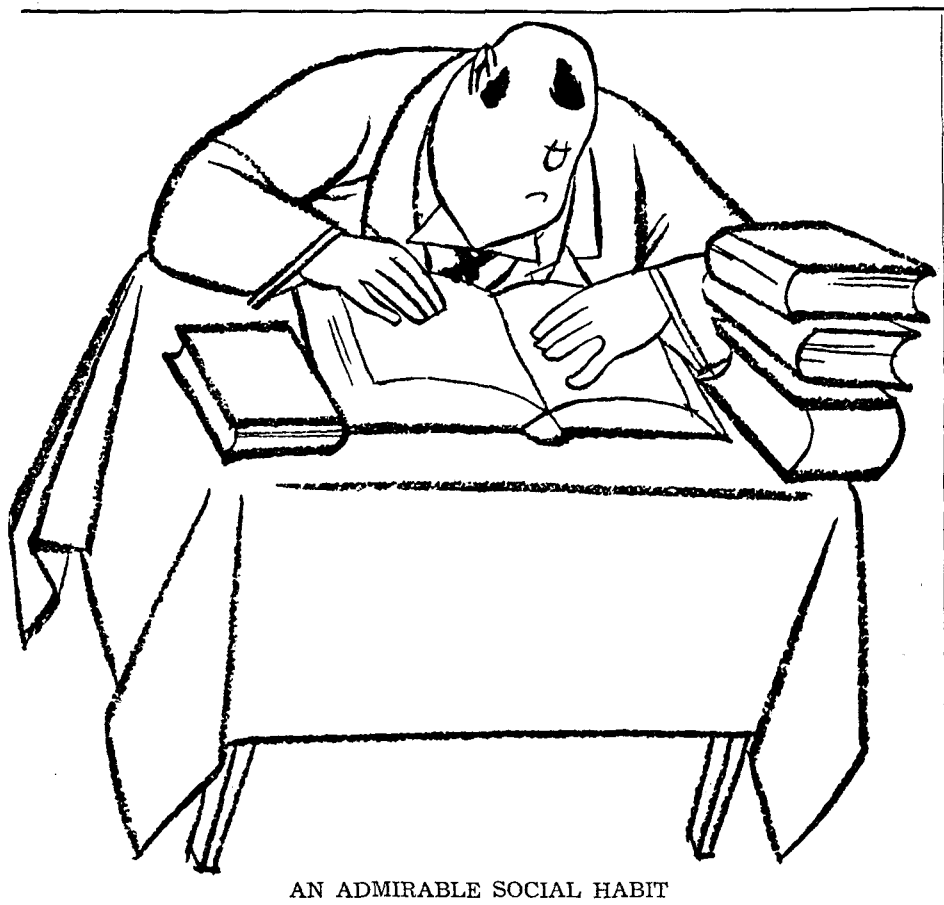

AN ADMIRABLE SOCIAL HABIT

DRAWING BY THOMAS DERRICK FOR HILAIRE BELLOC'S "NINE NINES" (Oxford, Eng.: Blackwell).

Gentility or Puritanism?

THE wary reader who finds opinion setting hard this way or that, asks what is the enemy that has sent so many birds flying. He knows, or it is time that he knows, what strange tricks the intellectual weather will play upon criticism. That which we think being half what we ought to think, and half the product of our fears, our hates, and our wishes, it is not surprising that a discount for errors cannot be made until one knows what is the enemy.

For twenty years American Puritanism has been under attack, although usually the enemy has not been essential Puritanism, which few of the critics have taken the trouble to understand, but the narrow and cramping formalism of small-town morals and small-town life. And few of the critics have escaped a reaction from their own anger. Puritanism is so closely inwoven in the fabric of American life, North, South, East, West, that to remove it entirely (which is, of course, impossible without a break in historic continuity) would result in a civilization which no native-born American would either like or understand. It is not now a religion that can be given up, or a code of ethics that can be deserted, or a regrettable influence that can be forgotten, but one of the strands of a national *mores* as different from its source as American individualism (and lawlessness) today is from the independence and freedom of the pioneer. Yet even a book as rich in its backgrounds and its thinking as Ludwig Lewisohn's recent "American Expression" is seriously injured as history by its conception of American literature from the beginning until today as something abstract, ideal, and unrealized which Puritans or Puritanisms were always trying to destroy. American literature is not an unrealized X but a concrete entity sprung of the American mind. It might have been better if our culture had been Catholic or Jewish in its origin, and so might we, or perhaps not. In any case, to write its history in terms of an ineradicable anti-Puritanism is good pamphleteering, but doubtful interpretation. Or rather, Mr. Lewisohn's book must take its place with those other works whose overstatements will eventually cancel out: the Federalist writers who praised the aristocratic in American letters, the genteel critics of the nineteenth century who tried to make us English, Mr. Parrington, who rediscovered American democracy, and the pioneer school who could see incipient greatness only on the frontier. In every instance there was an enemy to attack as well as a literature to be interpreted.

Another enemy, much hated just now, is the genteel tradition. The literary descriptions by some of the American critics hatched since the war give a curious picture of a nineteenth century America where genteel writers purred sexless nothings in books read exclusively by respectable spinsters. Maybe so, maybe not, as they say in Connecticut. But, what-

(*Continued on page* 615)

Put Out the Stars

By MARY B. MILLER

PUT out the stars
An instant, Lord,
Lest all these swords
And scimitars
Frighten this snail
Who goes abroad
For the first time
Without his mail;
Behold him laid
Along the thin
Tall blade of grass
Too frail for him,
He has no home,
No church or dome
To shelter him;—
Put out the stars
An instant, Lord,
Lest all these swords
And scimitars
Turn him to stone.

The Subtle Strachey

By H. A. L. FISHER

SOME time in 1903 there appeared in the *Independent Review* a notice of Miss Elizabeth Lee's translation of Vauvenargues, over the signature of G. Lytton Strachey. I remember thinking, as I read this review, from the pen of an unknown author, that here was one of those rare Englishmen who know French from the inside, who know it with the certainty and fulness of knowledge, to be expected, perhaps, of the son of a refined French mother, who had passed all his life in Paris in the society of distinguished Parisians of the Faubourg St. Germain. For the reviewer had not been afraid to give hostages to fortune. He had taken his courage in both hands, and offered versions of the original in order the better to bring out the fine, subtle, shades of meaning, which a conscientious English translator had just missed. It so happened that about this time the Editors of the Home University Library were looking for an author to undertake a volume on French literature. The publishers, very naturally, were anxious to apply to Edmund Gosse, an established oracle on French letters, a fine critic and delicate writer, whose well-practised hand could be counted on not to disappoint. They were kind enough, however, to concede to my earnest request that the volume should be entrusted to the unknown author of this short review, whom I had ascertained to be a young man, and a recent graduate of Cambridge.

I well remember my first interview with Strachey, a sensitive, ungainly youth, awkward in his bearing, and presenting an appearance of great physical debility, as if he had recently risen from the bed of an invalid. His voice was faint and squeaky. His pale face was at that time closely shaven. The long red beard of Lamb's portrait, which has made him so familiar, was a thing of the future. He was very silent, but uncannily quick and comprehending. I told him that I wanted him to write a sketch of French literature in fifty thousand words, and showed him J. W. Mackail's "Latin Literature," with which he was not then acquainted, as a model which he might be content to follow. He assented to my proposal with rare economy of speech, and with none of the usual expressions of diffidence, which an editor is accustomed to hear from an untried author to whom he has offered a task of exceptional difficulty. In a very few months the manuscript of the outlines of French literature was in my hands. It was a masterpiece of imaginative and scholarly appreciation, and an extraordinary achievement for so young a writer.

I doubt, indeed, whether Strachey ever wrote anything better than this little sketch of French literature. He had been largely educated in France, and had acquired what is so very difficult for an Anglo-Saxon to conceive, a real, and not a simulated, passion for the great masters of the seventeenth century. With the Romantic School he was plainly out of sympathy. Victor Hugo was too extravagant, too much given to false pathos and rodomontade, to please his severe, classical taste. He preferred Racine, with his beauties of "sentiment, of clarity, of refinement, of precision." The young man was very decided in his preferences. He had apparently found time to read all the great French authors, and there was no haziness about his views of them. He felt strongly, and could express his moods—which were none the less delicate because they were distinct—with a fine economy and choice of language.

This French classical writer, for in truth Strachey was by temperament and upbringing rather French than English, was in his true element as a critic of literature. Though he wrote much about men and women who have played a great part in the world of affairs, and always with the air of an amused spectator, his sympathy with the perplexities and agonies of the active life was never complete. He had never acted himself, had never been asked to assume responsibility for action. Appearing before the magistrates during the war to show cause why he should not serve at the Front, he blew out an air cushion before taking his seat, and comfortably seated on an air cushion he continued to survey with delicate irony the follies and eccentricities of mankind.

But here is the young Cambridge graduate in a world made after his heart, light, fantastic, ethereal. How well he enjoys himself!

> Marivaux was not a great tragic writer; he was not a poet; he worked on a much smaller scale, and with far less significant material. But he was a true dramatist, a subtle psychologist, and an artist pure and simple. His comedies, too, move according to the same laws as the tragedies of Racine. They preserve the same finished symmetry and design, and leave upon the mind the same sense of unity and grace. But they are slightly etherealized, fantastic; they are Racine, as it were, by moonlight. All Marivaux's dramas pass in a world of his own invention—a world curiously compounded of imagination and reality. At first sight one can see nothing there but a kind of conventional fantasy, playing charmingly round impossible situations and queer, delightful personages who would vanish in a moment into thin air at the slightest contact with actual flesh and blood. But if Marivaux had been simply fantastic and nothing more, his achievement would have been insignificant; his great merit lies in his exquisite instinct for psychological truth. His plays are like Watteau's pictures, which, for all the unreality of their atmosphere, produce their effect

This Week

"STALIN."
Reviewed by SHERWOOD EDDY.
"THEY CALL IT PATRIOTISM."
Reviewed by VASO TRIVANOVITCH.
"CZARDAS."
Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN.
"PORTRAIT OF A PALADIN."
Reviewed by MARION C. DODD.
"A GLASTONBURY ROMANCE."
Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT.
"THE SQUARE ROOT OF VALENTINE."
Reviewed by ROBERT NATHAN.
"LOADS OF LOVE."
Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM.
A GENTLEMAN UNAFRAID: O. W. FIRKINS.
By RICHARD BURTON.
HUMAN BEING.
By CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

Next Week, or Later

THE RED NUISANCE.
By ELMER DAVIS.

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owing to a mass of accurate observation and a profound sense of the realities of life. . . . "Le Jeu de l'Amour et du Hasard" is perhaps the most perfect example of his work. Here the lady changes places with her waiting maid, while the lover changes places with his valet, and, in the impossible framework of symmetrical complications the whole action spins itself out. The beauty of the little piece depends upon the infinitely delicate art which depicts each charmingly absurd, minute transition in the process of delusion, misunderstanding, bewilderment, and explanation, with all the varieties of their interactions and shimmering personal shades. It would be difficult to find a more exquisite example of tender and discriminating fidelity to the loveliest qualities in human nature than the scene in which Silvia realizes at last that she is in love —and with whom. "Ah! Je vois clair dans mon cœur!" she exclaims at the supreme moment; and the words might stand as the epitome of the art of Marivaux. Through all the superfine convolutions of his fancies and his coquetries he never loses sight for a moment of the clear truth of the heart!

It is not, however, upon his ripe and fastidious judgment of French letters that Strachey's reputation rests. A man might write like an angel for half a century about Villon and Corneille, Flaubert and Valéry without attracting the attention of more than a small circle of cultivated people. Strachey found his true vocation in a wider field. The singular popularity of this scrupulous craftsman in letters was based upon a new *genre* of literary biography which, from the moment of its first appearance in "Eminent Victorians," captivated the public taste and inspired a legion of imitators. Carlyle had introduced humor into the writing of history. Strachey served up his biographies in a sauce of piquant malice, which made them infinitely diverting to the jaded palate of the general reader. Writers of biographies are too often oppressed by a sense of almost intolerable responsibility. They must be discreet, must avoid giving offense to surviving relatives, must approach their subject with an air of importance and in a sustained attitude of reverential deference. From this solemn and obituary style of biographical composition Strachey was a thousand miles removed. In general he chose subjects which provided him with entertainment, and he was careful to see that no part of his own intimate enjoyment was lost to his readers.

The method, of course, has its dangers. In a diverting lecture on Pope, Strachey once congratulated himself that he lived in an age in which he could count upon being exempt from the methods of that virulent literary biographer.

> We may lament that flowered waistcoats are forbidden us, that we shall never ride in a sedan chair, or that we shall never see good Queen Anne taking tea at Hampton Court; but we can at least congratulate ourselves that we run no danger of waking up one morning to find ourselves exposed both now and forever to the ridicule of the polite world, that we are hanging by the neck and kicking our legs in the elegant gibbet that has been put up for us by the little monster of Twit'nam.

The author of "Eminent Victorians" and "Queen Victoria" is never coarse and virulent. He is not, like Pope, bent upon avenging private spites. He is always very much the witty, sensitive, and highly fastidious English gentleman. But has he not, despite his milder and more refined methods, and perhaps even more by reason of his mildness and refinement, left many of his victims hanging from an "elegant gibbet" and "exposed to the ridicule of the polite world"? What about Dr. Arnold and his pupil A. H. Clough, "this earnest adolescent with the weak ankles and the solemn face?" Is it an exaggeration to say that the sketch of Arnold is no better than an amusing caricature? The great Headmaster of Rugby was not the absurd figure of a pedagogue which Strachey, inspired by a vigorous dislike of the English public school, has so divertingly painted, but a great historical scholar as well as a vigorous man of action, and one of the early pioneers of German historical learning in England. All this scholarly side of Arnold's life could never be inferred from Strachey's essay. Nor is Arnold the only historian to be suspended from the elegant gibbet, and exposed to the ridicule of the polite world. A. E. Freeman comes in for similar chastisement. There is much that is exasperating about Freeman, but he was a bigger man than Strachey suspected and a very much better historian.

The well-known biography of Queen Victoria which followed in the train of "Eminent Victorians" is the perfected example of this half satirical, half poetical type of biography which has now enlisted so many imitators. The Queen appears as a comic character, but nevertheless as a great and pathetic figure from whom it is impossible to withhold sympathy and admiration. "Her vitality, her obstinacy, and the overwhelming sense of her own position," taken in connection with her industry and devotion to public duty, compel the respect of her strange admirer. Perhaps, indeed, it may be urged against Strachey's presentation of the Queen that he has failed to note a certain deterioration of character in later years to be ascribed to the demoralizing influence of autocratic power. But in substance his portrait is admirable. There is no object, however, small, upon the canvas which does not receive and reflect light. Here, for instance, is a passage, illustrating Queen Victoria's passion for methodical accumulation which reminds us of one of Chardin's famous still-life pieces.

> When she considered the multitudinous objects which belonged to her, or, better still, when, choosing out some section of them as the fancy took her, she actually savored the vivid richness of their individual qualities, she saw herself deliciously reflected from a million facets, felt herself magnified miraculously over a boundless area, and was well pleased. That was just as it should be; but then came the dismaying thought — everything slips away, crumbles, vanishes. Sèvres dinner-services get broken; even gold basins go unaccountably astray; even one's self, with all the recollections and experiences that make up one's being fluctuates, perishes, dissolves. . . . But no! It could not, should not, be so. There should be no changes, and no losses! Nothing should ever move—neither the past nor the present—she herself least of all! And so the tenacious woman hoarding her valuables, decreed their immortality with all the resolution of her soul. She would not lose one memory or one pin.
>
> She gave orders that nothing should be thrown away — and nothing was. There, in drawer after drawer, in wardrobe after wardrobe, reposed the dresses of seventy years. But not only the dresses—the furs and the mantles and subsidiary frills and the muffs and the parasols and the bonnets — all were ranged in chronological order, dated and complete. A great cupboard was devoted to the dolls; in the china-room at Windsor a special table held the mugs of her childhood, and her children's mugs as well. Mementoes of the past surrounded her in serried accumulations. In every room tables were powdered thick with the photographs of relatives; their portraits, revealing them at all ages, covered the walls; their figures, in solid marble, rose up from the pedestals, or gleamed from brackets in the form of gold and silver statuettes.

To most English readers the surprise of the book was the Prince Consort, who had not only been extremely unpopular during his lifetime as a foreigner who did not care about fox-hunting or the racecourse, but was also, and this largely by reason of his widow's mode of adoration, unduly depreciated after his death. "By a curious irony an impeccable waxwork had been fixed by the Queen's love in the popular imagination, while the creature whom it represented, the real creature, so full of energy and stress and torment, so mysterious and so unhappy and so fallible, and so very human, had altogether disappeared." Strachey paints an attractive picture of this intelligent and laborious German, who tried so hard to do his duty by the country of his adoption, and on one or two occasions, in spite of numerous incomprehensions, rendered it conspicuous service.

If we wish for an example of Strachey's peculiar technique as a biographer, the following passage descriptive of the relations of Disraeli and the Queen may serve as well as any.

> In women's hearts he had always read as in a book. His whole career had turned upon these curious entities; and the more curious they were, the more intimately at home with them he seemed to be. But Lady Beaconsfield, with her cracked idolatry, and Mrs. Brydges-Williams with her clogs, her corpulence, and her legacy were gone; an even more remarkable phenomenon stood in their place. He surveyed what was before him with the eye of a past master; and he was not for a moment at a loss. He realized everything — the interacting complexities of circumstance and character, the pride of place mingled so inextricably with personal arrogance, the superabundant emotionalism, the ingenuousness of outlook, the solid, the laborious respectability, shot through so incongruously by temperamental cravings for the colored and the strange; the singular intellectual limitations and the mysteriously essential female element impregnating every particle of the whole. A smile hovered over his impassive features, and he dubbed Victoria "the Faery."

Strachey is dead. He has left a body of literature, small in amount judged by modern standards, but so individual, so adroit, and so imaginative, and betraying in every sentence such an accomplished knowledge of the whole art and craft of authorship that it is assured of a permanent place so long as the taste for wit and elegance in English prose survives. He valued, and with some qualifications possessed, "the divine art of impartiality." If he was too scornful always to be fair, he had at least a full measure of that detachment from vulgar foibles which he applauds in David Hume. But when we have said that he was detached, impartial, witty, derisive, when we have appreciated his gift for persiflage, and his keen appetite for the demolition of legendary reputations, we have only said half of what is necessary. We forget the enthusiast for beauty who wrote the essays on Racine and Beddoes, the rebel from all conventions who declared that "it is the business of a poet to break rules and to baffle expectation; and all the masterpieces of the world cannot make a precedent." We forget the sensitive, artistic temperament, which obeyed the laws of its own being, and was always true to its inner promptings, no matter what the general voice might say. It was because Strachey united with much laborious historical scholarship these gifts of the poet and the satirist, because he moved in a world "curiously compounded of invention and reality" like one of those tragedies of Marivaux which he so much admired in youth, that he holds, and will continue to hold, a special place in English letters.

H. A. L. Fisher is Warden of New College Oxford, and President of the British Academy. From 1916-22 *he was President of the Board of Education.*

A FUNERAL IN STALIN'S RUSSIA. BY ILSE M. BISCHOFF
FROM "CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PRINTS" (AMERICAN ART DEALERS ASSOCIATION)

The Man of Steel

STALIN: The Career of a Fanatic. By ESSAD-BEY. New York: The Viking Press. 1932. $3.50.

Reviewed by SHERWOOD EDDY

VIVID with local color, dramatic in description, this intimate picture of Stalin is the most readable and interesting biography which has yet been written. It probably is not the most accurate, and many of its statements would have to be verified. This would be difficult, as the silent man who rules within the Kremlin over nearly one-sixth of the habitable globe always remains indifferent to his own reputation, having himself destroyed the records of some of the early years of his life.

Grimly realistic, unsparing in criticism of Stalin, this book is as fascinating as a novel. The reader finds himself looking on at the rise of this son of a village cobbler, this street urchin and gangster chief from the streets of the Georgian Asiatic city of Tiflis. We see him expelled from the theological seminary for his Marxian studies and conspiracy, becoming gradually a seasoned, hard fighting, bomb-throwing, two-gun revolutionary of the radical Lenin wing of the Social Democratic Party. Exposed to hunger, peril, and battles with the police, he is entrusted with the most dangerous bank and train robberies to fill the empty treasuries of the conspirators. The successful robbery of the transport of the State Bank of over $170,000 is only one of the daring exploits of this Georgian mountaineer.

The book gives the fullest picture of the early life of Stalin in the Caucasus and as an exile in Siberia of any of the volumes of his life in English. Six times he is banished to Siberia and five times he escapes. In 1913, he was banished into the wilderness of snow within the Arctic Circle, whence he was released by the Revolution of 1917. Altogether almost ten years were spent in exile in Siberia, partly in study, in plotting and planning, in learning the iron discipline which characterizes the man of "steel" which his name, Stalin, given him by Lenin, implies. Himself an Asiatic, there seems to run in his veins some of the Oriental blood of Jenghiz-Khan or Tamerlane. With little capacity for the intellectual ideology of Communism, Stalin became the shrewd, patient politician who gradually built up the political machine of the dictatorship by which he now rules Russia, always backed by the proletarian majority. While Lenin and the intellectuals were banished he became the leader of the Party in Russia in the secret post of danger.

Yielding unquestioning obedience to Lenin as his moral and intellectual leader, under his direction he wrote the slogans of the revolution, such as, "Bread, Freedom, Peace" and played an often silent but dominant part in the inner councils of the Party, the leadership of the Revolution, and even on the field of battle during the Civil Wars. A poor speaker, a bad writer, no thinker, he always shunned the limelight of publicity and left the popular leadership to the more brilliant but mercurial and ambitious Trotsky. The Revo-

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lution had produced the great triumvirate of Lenin, Trotsky, and Stalin. With the passing of their leader a struggle for power became inevitable between the two younger men, at swords points, and differing in temperament, in philosophy, in principle—in everything. In the strife between the brilliant European and the subtle Asiatic, "two worlds, the old, lazy, fatalistic, experienced, and spiritually enlightened world of Asia, unshakable in its primeval strength, and the restless, scintillating, nervous, intellectual, and reflective world of Europe, were confronting each other. In the person of Trotsky, Europe despised Stalin, the Asiatic. And Stalin's Asia requited this contempt with hatred." Trotsky, with his belief in the "permanent revolution," was a romantic. Stalin, pictured as a realist of colossal proportions, holds to his fatalistic goal: "To conquer the world and make mankind happy by force."

"Stalin alone has survived. His dark shadow is cast over the whole of the Czar's Empire. Stalin, who never strove after position or fame, whom no one knew . . . has become a more important figure than Lenin."

Sarajevo and After

THEY CALL IT PATRIOTISM. By BRUNO BREHM. Boston: Little, Brown & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by VASO TRIVANOVITCH

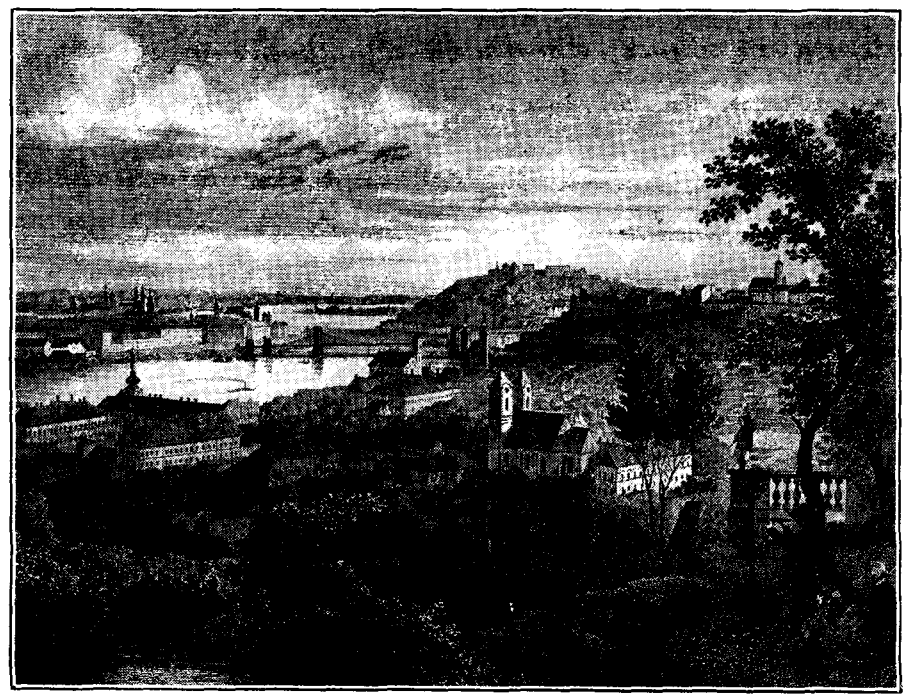
THERE is little in this book that is not already known about the assassination of the King and Queen of Serbia in 1903, the Sarajevo assassination in June, 1914, and the judicial murder of Colonel Dimitrijevich in Salonica in 1917. The author has his imagination under strict control. The actual events are so startling and tragic that there is no need to magnify them. All that the author does is to make the characters talk and describe their emotions. In this he is in most cases very successful. His information is in the main accurate, although he makes a number of crude errors. He does not rely on official records. Although an Austrian by birth, his sympathies are on the side of the oppressed South Slavs. The book is free from any animosity or propaganda. The author does not criticize or condemn. There is mild bitterness here and there, but on the whole the book is written with philosophic detachment.

"They Call It Patriotism" is not a novel. The only woman in the book is the wife of the Archduke Francis Ferdinand. All important characters are historical figures. Some of them, as, for example, Alexander Karageorgevich, King of Jugoslavia, General Peter Zhivkovich, Prime Minister of Jugoslavia, Ljuba Davidovich, leader of the Serbian Democratic party, are alive at the present time. The central figures in the book are Colonel Dragutin T. Dimitrijevich, who organized the plot against the King and Queen in 1903, who placed the present dynasty on the throne, who was one of the leaders of the Jugoslav revolutionary movement against Turkey and Austria, and who was executed by the Serbian Government in Salonica in 1917 at the command of the Prince Regent, whose father owed his throne to Dimitrijevich; Archduke Francis Ferdinand, the Austrian Heir Apparent, whose assassination by a South Slav student was the immediate cause of the World War; and Gavrilo Princip, son of a Herzegovinian peasant, whose two shots killed the Austrian Heir Apparent and his wife in June, 1914. He was arrested and condemned to twenty years in jail, because he was too young to hang, and died in April, 1918, in an Austrian dungeon, a few months before the downfall of the monarchy, when he would have been hailed as a national hero by the grateful Jugoslavs.

The book contains a series of episodes in the lives of these three extremely interesting persons, beginning with a royal murder and ending with a royal crime. American readers will find it very difficult to remember the names of the various Jugoslav and Austrian characters, but it is not necessary to make an effort to keep them in mind. The principal personalities stand out clearly.

It would be interesting and rather important to know on what sources the author bases his interpretations of the historical events described in the book. It has, for example, never been definitely ascertained that Colonel Dimitrijevich had actually met the assassins of the Austrian Heir Apparent; that Colonel Artamanov, Russian Military Attaché in Belgrade, was aware of the plot to assassinate the Heir Apparent; that the conspirators had joined the Black Hand before going to Sarajevo; or that Colonel Dimitrijevich and his two friends were executed in Salonica in 1917 on account of their participation in the Sarajevo assassination. The author reports a conversation that supposedly took place between the Prince Regent of Serbia, Alexander, and Ljuba Davidovich, member of the Coalition Cabinet, in June, 1917, concerning the officers condemned to death. The conversation takes place in the Prince's automobile, with no witnesses present. Davidovich pleads with the Prince to set aside the death sentence, because "we can't . . . weld this new kingdom together with the blood of the Radical Party's opponents, even though the party is now in power. We can't begin our new history with a judicial murder." The Prince Regent stops the car and asks Davidovich to get out, saying, "I don't need a Kerenski." The significance of the author's charge against the Prince Regent, the present King of Jugoslavia, is known only to those who are familiar with the background of the Salonica affair.

The translation is very well done, and the style and descriptive passages of "They Call It Patriotism" are excellent.



BUDAPEST. FROM AN OLD PRINT

Gentility or Puritanism?

(*Continued from page* 613)

ever the truth, why so hot about this attempted gentility? The 'seventies and the 'eighties certainly needed it, needed it perhaps more than better literature which they were in no condition to assimilate, needed it as much as New York today needs a dose of humor, good manners, and graciousness. These correctives are not the elements of great literature, but a society that lacks them should be thankful for its Twains, its Howells's, its Aldriches, its Holmes's, and its Longfellows. The corrective these applied to the short-sleeve individualism of the brownstone age was not very profound, but a little of the same (by Oliver Wendell by choice, or even by the now so much despised Howells) would be useful medicine for the titans and the rebels of our soft-collared anarchism, who are so ruthless in the slovenliness of their writing, or for the young realists whose books are composed as if meant only to be read in speakeasies and after midnight. The genteel tradition and the genteel school was, one must admit, feeble as a whole, though it produced some masterpieces, and therefore that it should have become an enemy against which critics mouth and spit stirs more than a faint suspicion that the communist, the hard-boiled, the tough sophisticate. and the moral surrender schools of writing are a little worried lest there is some element not very well understood by them which they have missed. Is it gentility? Maybe so, maybe not. The remedy seems superficial. Or is it some strain of which the best of Puritanism, and none of its worst, was part?

Eternal Quest

CZARDAS. A Story of Budapest. By JENO HELTAI. Woodcut decorations by LYND WARD. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by BEN RAY REDMAN

THANKS to information furnished on its jacket, any reviewer of this novel is able to state that its title should be pronounced Chardásh, that this title is the name of a Magyar dance, and that its author, "vice-president of the International Society of Dramatic Authors, president of the Hungarian branch, and director of the Theatre de Belvaros—is recognized throughout Europe as the most distinguished man of letters of present-day Hungary." For knowledge of these facts a reviewer may have to thank the publishers, but he would be witless indeed were he incapable of realizing without assistance that "Czardas" is one of the most remarkable and original novels that have come out of Europe since the war. Two forces animate it: the magic potency of the dream, and the harsh thrust of daily, sordid life. It finds symbols for a human hunger that is eternal and familiar, but the symbols have been reached through personal, poignantly felt, experience; and the result is that greatest of artistic triumphs—an enduring theme, charged with new power and new meaning.

In the summer of 1917, Peter Karmel, aged thirty-six, returned from the Galician front to Budapest, having been invalided out of the flying service minus his left arm. "His general health was not too bad; but sometimes there was a constant swarming, a constant buzzing in his head —like an anthill gone mad, a beehive that had taken a drink. . . ." And besides the indeterminate buzzing, even before he had been discharged from hospital, he heard voices clearly and saw faces. There was the angry voice of his old teacher, always reproaching him; there was the Porcelain Woman, who sat on his bed and kissed him, and whose left arm was missing, too. But the boldest of the mysterious visitors was the Blind Man.

> He came to see him every day, and Karmel could hear him coming by the echo of his footsteps on the flags of the passage. An invisible hand removed all obstacles from his path. The Blind Man advanced with an assured step, sat down on Karmel's knees, and peered at him vindictively from behind his dark glasses. He pricked him with the point of his iron-shod stick.

These voices and figures went with him to Budapest, followed him into the squalid bedroom of a low lodging-house in which Karmel hid fearfully from a world of which he no longer felt himself a part. Why did they come to him, from somewhere out of his lost past; what did they mean to him, and what did they want of him? He sought escape through brandy, but they were persistent. The line between hallucination and reality became indistinct, vanished; he dreamed with open eyes, and seemed most aware when dreaming. (So cunningly has Heltai twisted his threads that the reader can never be quite sure where fact merges with fancy; but the artistic illusion is complete, there is no hint of improbability.) And Karmel, harrassed by voices and faces he could only partially identify, became obsessed by the necessity of rediscovering his own past: not only must he find and identify the Blind Man and the Porcelain Woman, but he must reestablish contact with the Countess Iris, Irene, and the others. Consequently his story, his whole activity, became a desperate *recherche du temps perdu.* He must square himself with that past, he must pay the great and small debts unwittingly contracted in it.

Perhaps, almost certainly, all this sounds confusing and a little mad, phrased in the brevities necessitated by a review; but in the novel itself, whatever there may be of madness, there is no confusion. Nor will a reviewer be doing his duty ill if he merely provokes, without satisfying, curiosity regarding this strange tale. Let it suffice to say that we follow Karmel in his quest of past time; with him we meet the Blind Man and the Porcelain Woman, we rediscover Irene and the Countess Iris, we revisit the House of Dreams. With him we learn that his search, at last, resolves itself into the old quest of unattainable beauty, of flawless perfection, by the flawed human animal. And we remember those lines of Francis Thompson—

> Lo ever thus, even at consummating,
> Even in the swooning minute that claims her his,
> Even as he trembles to the impassioned kiss
> Of reincarnate Beauty, his control
> Clasps the cold body, and foregoes the soul!

And, again, those lines of Laurence Binyon's—

> Why into hearts so small
> Were crammed these hungering immensities,
> Thrust each day back to a prison that denies
> Their native satisfaction?

But, says "Czardas," if ultimate beauty cannot be embraced by man, his dream of it cannot be taken from him; and he will create a symbol of it for himself, out of whatever material may be at hand, even though it be nothing better than common mud. He must have his House of Dreams, though to the rest of the world it appear only a vulgar dwelling inhabited by a vulgar woman. For it is not by bread alone, but also by illusion, that man lives.

El Cid

PORTRAIT OF A PALADIN. By VINCENTE HUIDOBRO. Translated by WARRE B. WELLS. New York: Horace Liveright. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by MARION C. DODD

THE Cid, familiar Spanish hero of strength in battle, has walked through many pages of romance and adventure. He appears again here in a translation of a modern Spanish work, and has lost none of his fantastic strength and daredevil courage. The book is written as a novel, but, by the free, semi-poetic style in which it surges unrestrainedly into the spirit of its subject, it achieves also another quality, quite original and imaginative. History and legend, of course, both appear, as Moors and Christians struggle in medieval Spain. It would be impossible to disentangle the threads of truth and fiction, nor does the author wish to, though a few legends he tells us he has discarded as being spurious in consideration of the known character of the hero. His feeling for the background and his obvious love for his subject—fostered by blood relationship with the descendants of old Spanish heroes—have been well transferred to these English pages by the translator, and the book will be enjoyed by many who are looking for something a little "different."

Doubleday, Doran & Company offer a prize of fifty dollars for the best list of twenty-five titles in the field of historical fiction, published during the last ten years.

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The Life of a Town

A GLASTONBURY ROMANCE. By JOHN COWPER POWYS. New York: Simon & Schuster. 1932. $3.75.

Reviewed by BASIL DAVENPORT

GLASTONBURY is by common consent of Europe the place where the Holy Grail stayed as long as it remained on earth; it was identified with Avalon, the enchanted island of Morgan le Fay, and until its great church was destroyed, the tombs of Arthur and Guinevere were to be seen there; it was the scene, according to some legends, of a disappearance or apotheosis of Merlin. Before and after the time of King Arthur it has been sacred; there, according to the Druids, was kept the Magic Caldron of the Mabinogion, which fed men by miracle ("the pagan Grail," the author calls it); and there in our own time the discovery of unsuspected ruins through automatic writing was one of the most important pieces of psychic evidence. Mr. Powys says of Glastonbury that as since the Reformation almost no force has been dipped out of it, as it constantly is from the other great centers of pilgrimage like Rome, it is the greatest source of spiritual potential energy in the world. It is Glastonbury itself that is the chief actor in this new book.

Mr. Powys has tried, that is, to depict the entire life of the town, as that of a place in which all the inhabitants are more or less influenced by the psychic lines of force that come from it. The main plot is concerned with the struggle between two parties, one headed by John Geard, which wishes to restore Glastonbury to its place as one of the shrines of the world, beginning by giving a Passion Play, and another, headed by Philip Crow, which wishes to build factories, mine for tin, and make the town a thriving, prosperous, industrial center. But besides this there are innumerable minor plots, which among them produce, as the author proudly boasts, "six major love affairs, one murder, three births, and two deaths." Mr. Powys is deeply interested in the deep causes that underlie their actions. He is so much concerned with heredity that he seems to bring together characters from all over England for the sake of their different ancestral strains; there are Danish descendants from Norfolk, an Iberian from the Scilly Isles, a nobleman descended from Charlemagne, and a Varangian Guardsman at Byzantium, and others. And even below heredity lie the psychic forces on which the author constantly insists. Some of the characters work out theologies of their own. Thus John Geard, who begins as an evangelical Christian fanatic, ends by abandoning Christ for a pure cultus of the Grail, as a fragment of the Absolute in its own right, and in its power works miracles. Young Sam Dekker believes in Christ as a type of Prometheus, the superhuman friend of man against the cruel Creator; he becomes an ascetic saint, and is rewarded with a vision of the Grail. Mr. Evans is tormented by temptations to sadism, and though he cannot help his desires, fears that he has committed the Unpardonable Sin; he joins the party of the Passion Play, in the hope that by taking the part of the Christus and enduring the torture of crucifixion with cords he can offer an acceptable penance.

Besides all this, there is Mr. Powys's own belief. He explains in his own person that the Primal Deity is an exact balance of good and evil; and by the mouth of one of his characters that the struggle between these halves of God *is* life; "if the Spirit of Good should ever conquer entirely—I hope one day it will—there would be no more life." But besides this ultimate Janus, there are innumerable lesser divinities, more or less powerful and more or less good. The sun, the stars, one's dead ancestors, if they were strong characters and are interested in one, Christ, Who is present in a semi-material form, drawn by the devotions of Good Friday, "the Being called Merlin"—these are some of them.

Mr. Powys has given us much indeed in this book, and we should be grateful to him. There is a very real feeling of just that corner of Somerset, with its apple trees and its thick mists, as being different from all other places in the world; the sense of a *genius loci* has never been more strongly conveyed. There is a sense of the spiritual depth and height of the universe that is good to find. There is a strain of wild poetry, rather like that of "Wuthering Heights," that sometimes flowers into fine passages. And there are some splendidly dramatic scenes and fine moments in it.

And yet, with all this, one must say that the author has given us both too little and too much. Too little, because the action does not after all seem to justify all the supernatural "machinery," as Dr. Johnson would have called it. For a single instance out of many, we are asked to believe that the Vicar is brought to tragedy because of the hostility of the Sun, who resents the worship of other gods, especially when he is himself high, as he is at eleven on Sunday mornings; but the Vicar's illicit but suppressed passion, and his quarrel with his son, which is later made up, hardly seem consonant with the vengeance of a Prince of the Powers of the Air. When Geard stays in the haunted chamber where Merlin killed King Mark, the event is not great enough for our forebodings. Even the murder (committed by a lunatic) is not sufficiently important to bring in the interference of so many of the Company of Heaven and Hell; and the six major love affairs and all the rest of the action pale into insignificance against its vague but fiery background of Arthurian legends and Druidic myths.

But we are also given too much, for it is hard to sustain our interest in the sordid threads, through the twelve hundred pages of this volume. One has a feeling that the book is filled with things that are of intense interest to the author but fail to interest us.

The fundamental reason why one feels this want of interest in many of the actions is probably that the characters are too far outside our experience—indeed, like Mr. Wells's world that "has a kink in it so that all their planes are cylinders," they are too far outside our whole habit of thought. The ascetic sadist, the ugly, coarse, miracle-working Geard, and all the rest of them in their degree, seem as if they were seen through some distorting medium. For all that we are told of the hereditary and other forces controlling them, it is impossible to predict their actions. Thus Geard cures a hopeless case of cancer, and later actually raises the dead, but these miracles have apparently no effect, no interest even, for the rest of the townsmen. As Mr. Richard Hughes says of children, "Their minds do not work in the same way that ours do; that is, they are mad."

"A Glastonbury Romance" must be put down as a magnificent failure, a failure of more interest than many successes upon a lower plane, one that is worth reading and interesting to discuss, one modified by many splendid adjectives; but that must be the noun.

Enchanting Excursion

THE SQUARE ROOT OF VALENTINE. By BERRY FLEMING. New York: W. W. Norton & Co. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by ROBERT NATHAN

THERE are still a great many worthy people in the world who believe that a novel ought to be a record of the neighbors. For them, the more labored the record, the better the novel. Mr. Fleming will receive from this school of criticism either a loud pooh, or silence. But he has created something of his own which will delight a few of us for whom the neighbors are no more interesting than the ancient Greeks or the Pueblo Indians.

He has gone on an enchanting excursion of the mind. He imagines for himself a young man suffering from a duality of personality. The fact is that there are really two strongly developed Valentines within the single Valentine; two impulses in conflict within the one psyche. And Mr. Fleming believes that it is possible, at the moment of most intense conflict, to separate them forever.

It is a problem which touches us all these days; for no one is entirely whole any more. And more than anyone else it touches the artist, who must make a living for himself, and yet do his work in a world where there is neither buying nor selling; who must suffer as the world suffers, starve as the world starves, and yet refrain from being vexed by these phenomena. Valentine—who is not an artist—solves his problem by dividing himself into his own square root. Actually, that is something for the psychiatrists: it is called schizophrenia. But Mr. Fleming makes it sound more agreeable than schizophrenia. He even makes a charming love story out of it.

The book is rich with thought, and loud with humor. Like the modern works of art, it tries to tell us more than language can say. But where Mr. Joyce leans upon new sounds to speak to our inner ears

JOHN COWPER POWYS

with choicer meanings, Mr. Fleming wisely relies upon his thoughts alone.

An eerie light illumines the first half of the book; one is reminded of Algernon Blackwood. After that, one is unfortunately reminded of other writers.

For Mr. Fleming has not written his book as well as he might. He has allowed himself to go slack at times, to appear loose and careless, even to be dull. He has not been vigilant enough in his own vineyard; he has not pruned and pared enough; he has not always seemed to know what was the shortest distance between two points. The book, of 281 pages, might have been shorter, it might have been lovelier, it might even have been funnier.

It troubles me to be obliged to mix blame with the praise. But fantasy such as this, satire such as this, demands a pen as dry as a sword, and an inflexible wrist. It must always be fine, always delicious; it must never falter. The satirist must not try to explain too much to his reader; he must take his own nonsense for granted; he must believe it himself. He must, as Mr. Fleming has not quite done, take the square root of himself; and then forget that there is anything else in the world but the single root which remains.

Robert Nathan, poet, novelist, and composer, is the author of a number of books which delightfully mingle satire and fantasy. Among his tales are "Autumn," "The Puppet Master," "The Bishop's Wife," and "The Orchid."

The Way of Bessie

LOADS OF LOVE. By ANNE PARRISH. New York: Harper & Brothers. 1932. $2.50

Reviewed by GLADYS GRAHAM

ANNE PARRISH has produced her latest satiric comment upon the strange and foolish ways of man with much broader effects and quicker development than is usual with her. Perhaps it is the obviousness of her central character that has led her a little from the subtler technique of her earlier novels. Perhaps, having been concerned heretofore with the deeper hidden and more devious perversities of human nature, she has been appealed to by the absurdities and contradictions that lie nearer the surface of life as offering fresh material. Whatever the reason, "Loads of Love" is a broad-brushed tragi-comedy that is boisterously funny, even to the verge of slapstick, in the telling of a story that is in itself bitter with the waste and futility of young energy and young desire. The ludicrous unrolling of a tragic minor theme has not often been selected as matter for novelists, although life has been dealing in that particular admixture for a long, long time.

The disastrous results of good intentions let loose without understanding is the uncompromising text of the book. The heroine, Bessie, is a fountain head of undirected, good intent. She signs her letters, "Loads of love from Bessie," and these loads of love are dumped willy-nilly upon the objects of her omnivorous attention. She can look upon no scene without wanting to change it for the better,—her better. With all this love, and equal loads of money, and no tact and no imagination, the amount of incidental damage she can do is appalling. She bursts like a bomb into the affairs of everyone she loves, and from each of these altruistic explosions less hardy individuals retire with the scars of Bessie's good deeds upon them. But Bessie herself seems to gain enough impetus from each encounter to bound to the next, and so she goes hurtling along her destructive zig-zag course through life. She has a house in the mountains called "Heart's Ease," with furnishings to match, and here her impromptu invitations draw together the strangely assorted group whose lives are to be bent or broken by Bessie's loving ineptitude. Among her hardy-perennial type of guests, well armored with platitudes and fluent sentimentalism, Bessie is unable to do much permanent harm, but with the two more sensitive young people in the book, to whom she is for a time a beneficent force, her wrecking potentialities are at last fully and fatally realized.

Bessie as a character is too entirely herself to be compared with anyone else. Whether or not her like could ever be found outside the book is a question of total indifference because her existence within her own purlieus is so undeniably right in every detail. A farcical character, she never misses her own key. Of the others in the book so much cannot be said. The mother of the young man who comes to destruction through Bessie is a type figure that has swept through recent fiction and drama like a news story. The friend of the young girl involved in the tragedy is another type enjoying contemporary publicity. But, after all, Bessie is the book and the book is Bessie, and that is why other considerations will matter very little to readers who turn to Bessie for amusement.

A Balanced Ration for a Week's Reading

AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY. By FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT. *Longmans, Green.*

The life story of the architect who is regarded by many American critics of his art as a genius in his field.

A GLASTONBURY ROMANCE. By JOHN COWPER POWYS. *Simon & Schuster.*

A long novel describing "the story of the life of a particular spot upon the earth's surface."

NONSUCH: LAND OF WATER. By WILLIAM BEEBE. *Brewer, Warren & Putnam.*

The chronicle of a scientist's explorations in Bermuda waters.

The Saturday Review of LITERATURE

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NOBLE A. CATHCART.....*Publisher*

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Sounds of the Desert

ALARMS AND EXCURSIONS IN ARABIA. By BERTRAM THOMAS. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company. 1931. $4.

Reviewed by CHARLES A. KOFOID

INTERPRETERS of Arabia to the Occident, from Niebuhr and Palgrave to Doughty and Lawrence, have revealed a land of sand and strife where political and intertribal bonds are as incoherent as the shifting dunes of the desert. Arabia Infelix was well named. The sand storms and desert thorn are quite as hospitable as the Badawin raider to the intruder, unless he comes with compelling authority, or under the auspices of a friendly Shaikh. Arabia is not only inhospitable, she is positively hostile, and supplements this with a militant religious exclusivism. This is the welcome she extends to outside authority, to taxes, to infidels, and to meddlers in general.

Listen to the final and categorical "No" which the Arabs of the unknown horn of Arabia send to the friendly native representative of the English surveyors after eight weeks of friendly negotiations:

> From All the Shihuh Community of Qada,
>
> To the High, Glorious, Honored, and Stately Shaikh Jesus, Son of the Servant of the Kind One.
>
> Peace be unto you and God's mercy and his blessings always. And after be it known to you that the incident which has happened in connection with the English . . . we have heard about it and now we inform you to be careful, you and the English. . . . we have nothing to do with you and do not be interferers in our precincts and properties, and the place in which your desire lies is our property and precincts, and whoever of you tresspasses in that quarter not one of you shall return. By God! By God! By God! and by the Lord's glory and by the Right of the Proud. We desire Jihad (religious war), and kill whomsoever arrives in our quarter and will spare none of them to return. . . . we do not recognize Shaikh nor Governor nor Sultan, and now we warn you with every warning, take heed to arrive at this place. And you, O Shaikh Isa! pardon from you. Be helpful to fend off the enemy with means that will succeed, and this is what is required of you. This is the policy of the infidels and do not bring upon yourself blame. And a hint will suffice the wise. . . . We drink the blood and we do not care. It is requested from you to fend off this matter and do not interfere in our precincts and property. Your despotism be upon yourselves and your danger be upon yourselves. Do not blame us and salaams.
>
> (Signed) Muhammad bin Sulaiman,
> Shaikh al Badu in Qada.

The Arabia which Mr. Bertram Thomas reveals has not the pleasant-Sunday-afternoon-tea atmosphere which pervades Miss Gertrude Bell's enthusiastic patronage of the followers of Islam. His knowledge was gained during the war and in post-war years in the political service of the British Empire. He was one of the younger Political Officers in Mesopotamia during the war, served in Trans-Jordania after the war, and was later selected to fill the responsible post of Wazir (Prime Minister) and Financial Adviser to His Highness the Sultan of Muscat and Oman, Sir Saiyid Taimur ben Faisal. He thus came to know the Valley of the Euphrates, with its winding canals and lagoons, the land of the Shuhites with its palm-fringed shores, and the desert wastes of the hinterland where the raiding Wahhabis rule. Better yet he came to know the Arab and to be known among them, to understand their modes of thinking and acting, and to move freely among them with the sympathy of an understanding mind.

His account is very direct and immediate, without orientation for his reader, and with none of the page-filling expedients which those who have less to tell are wont to employ. He speaks from a rich experience and a full heart, for Arabia cast her spell over him. As one reads his pages he sees the flashing steel of the sword dance of welcome to the visiting caravan, hears the tinkle of the bells on the roads beyond the palm-shaded villages, on the precipitous mountain trails, and across the desert sands. He dips his hands into the halwa (Turkish delight) and sips the coffee of inescapable custom. He smells the sweat of grunting camels, relishes the sweet curds, and listens to the racy tales of Arabian nights at the evening camp long after the stars have lighted the desert wastes.

The story of political intrigue, of defection and rebellion, of feuds and counter feuds, of rescue by aeroplane, and chastising bombardments staged for political pressure rather than slaughter, of recalcitrant shaikhs reduced to voluble obsequiousness, all this in reality forms only a foil for a thrilling account of the career of a political administrator in a would-be hostile environment. The obstacles to be overcome are not so much rifle fire and trenches, as pride, superstition, distrust, jealousy and immemorial custom. It is the impact of British spirit of fair play and man-to-man open dealing, with Oriental subterfuge, intrigue, and indirectness. As applied psychology, this book is an unconscious contribution to interracial internationalism.

Place names are the fossilized records of the passing processions of men. The Ainu left his names beside the salmon rivers and in the fertile valleys of Japan, which linger long after his northward trek. Our author finds in the tribal names of Oman the evidences that the Babylonian author of the Book of Job drew his local color from the peninsula of Musandam on the Great Trade Route between India and Babylonia. The Sabæans and Chaldeans who despoiled Job of his servants and camels are represented today in the Bani Khalid as well as in the Gens Chaldei of Pliny.

Those who seek to understand Islam's destructive career in modern Africa and to untangle the shifting political policies in the Near East will find the Arab portrayed by a sympathetic and withal an impartial pen in this intimate account of Arabian customs, behavior, and reactions to the impinging Occident.

Motives Behind Actions

EMOTIONAL CURRENTS IN AMERICAN HISTORY. By J. H. DENISON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1932. $5.

THE author of this volume is playing on the edges of one of the most fascinating fields that is spread before the student of humanity and its affairs. Modern psychology, whatever its ultimate contribution to human knowledge, has profoundly affected our current interpretations of the motives behind personal actions. It is inevitable that the motives behind national actions shall be subjected to like scrutiny and forced to contribute their bit to our understanding.

Mr. Denison has undertaken to set forth the principal emotional currents that have influenced the course of American history. As is customary among psychologists, he ascribes practically every act to the bursting of an emotional charge, largely ignoring both the existence and the contribution of other factors.

For example, if a street gamin snatches my pocketbook, I will promptly make after him to regain and perhaps give him a cuff on the ear to boot. The psychologist would say that it was emotion that spurred me to act. The economist might say it was an economic motive. Each could prove at least that without his element no activity would have resulted. But it is a nice question whether, both being essential, one or the other is of primary importance.

It is extremely useful to have a book such as this to point out the part that emotion has played in our national life. It is also important to have the economic interpretations of our national motivations. It is perhaps a little disappointing to find they run so nearly parallel. Just as, whether economics or psychology is dominant, I should set off after my purse-snatching gamin.

This raises the query as to whether Mr. Denison has really got beneath the surface of his subject. Peopling our history with "The New England Dynamic Current," "The Colonial Spirit," "The National Spirit," "The Imperialistic Dynamic Current," "The Enchantress of Worldly Gain," and a score of others, may make it read more like a fairy tale. But does it greatly increase our understanding of it?

Mr. Denison has made an excellent beginning, and, despite a great deal of most interesting material, only a beginning. He has, if you like, surveyed the field and done a little clearing here and there. But it must all be cleared and then ploughed deep before we shall begin to reap the harvests of which it is capable. We should like to spur Mr. Denison and others who have a comparable equipment to further efforts.

A Gentleman Unafraid

(O. W. FIRKINS, obit March 7, 1932)

By RICHARD BURTON

WHEN I went to the University of Minnesota in 1898, to teach literature, I found in the English department a shy, delicate-looking fellow, with a porcelain quality about him of fragile purity, whom I at once recognized as unusual and warmed to as a colleague. And the other day, gray-haired, in the middle sixties, still a boy in purity, high ideals and a strange unworldliness—a boy only slightly damaged by time—he went to his reckoning. To the few, he was seen as something very rare and precious. To many more, he had standing as an acute critic, a teacher who enthralled the ablest students of his university, a speaker on literary themes of thrilling, however unconventional, aspect and influence.

A part of Oscar Firkins's elusive personality can be felt in such books as he gave the world; but only a part. His books left unpublished would enrich his literary legacy, reveal him more fully. And there was still left that portion of his being to be discovered through direct contact; the sap and savor of his character came as a gift from intimacies hard to win, the more prized when once the barriers were let down, to admit you to the fine *fleur* of his spirit.

Reading his study of Emerson, of Howells, most of all of Jane Austen, with whom he was exquisitely in sympathy, one sensed somewhat of this, I say, as one did in that other expression of his power, the one-act collection of plays, "Two Passengers for Chelsea"; for me, the piece in that volume, "The Undying Prince," is the finest, most original thing in its *genre* done by an American. And one also gleaned from his many flashing criticisms and reviews, as they appeared during his two years' occupancy of the chair of dramatic criticism for the *Weekly Review*, or in many a paper for the *Saturday Review*, the *Nation* (where he for years was poetry critic), the *Yale Review*, and like periodicals, that here was a mind of the first order, marvellous for acute discrimination, for the perception of subtle analogies, and for an expressional facility that clothed intellectual structure with decorative charm. But more than mind was there. One was aware of a lofty soul which dictated the spiritual tests at the bottom of all his critical judgments. In this respect he favored the Past, was in the true Emersonian tradition. But his view, and his manner of asserting his view, were splendidly his own: a critic with standards founded on a wide, catholic culture, but a critic as well whose instinctive probity made him adamant to any laudation that was kindly at the expense of truth. I have never known a man with such Rhadamanthus-like austerity in estimating literary art and endeavor. To him, always, art was more than any artist; he held himself and his fellows to a plane of intellectual conduct having in it nothing of the shift of fashion or of market place concessions. Absolutely, in this respect he was a denizen of another world, of Plato's ideal Republic. His social shyness, his almost recluse manner of life were the external signs of this inner mould of a personality impossible to put in any category. It doubtless kept him from the wider social contacts with his peers which would have broadened his immediate fame. Yet, somehow, the news got about. Before he had written or published a book, he was elected to our National Institute, purely on the merit of his scattered criticism. When William Archer, coming to this country, was asked who, if anybody, he desired to see, he replied, "Only Firkins, who seems to me your one important critic." And there were other testimonies.

The homely idiom, "he talks like a book," comes to my mind in thinking of Firkins; the saying might have originated in an attempt to describe him. His speech in ordinary conversation had a precision, a quaint elegance, a nice feeling for the nuances of expression, in a word, the unbelievable literary flavor we expect only on the printed page. It was amazing that anybody in the rough-and-ready exchanges of daily intercourse could discourse like that! Epigrams dropped from his lips like ripe nuts off a tree; he spoke in tropes as if that were the most natural way. Imagine such a person at a five o'clock tea! Small talk, even, exposed to his treatment, either withered away, or blossomed into something rich and fine, if only there were ears to hear. At times, perhaps, he tortured a simple thing into too much of ornamentation, or pushed a thought to the vanishing point. It was only the defect of a quality as exceptional as it was exciting.

At the moment, I hardly know whether the final estimate of Firkins will be as literary critic or creator. Did a contemporary critic ever guess right? It is likely that as we grope for the man's significance, we shall describe him as a critic of letters. Yet, at the end, when every man gets his rating in the cool, wise verdict of Time, I am not certain we shall not equally emphasize his dramatic writing, or his poetry. Below on this page may be read one of his lyrics (appearing hitherto only in a local college paper) of a chaste, a classic beauty, deserving to be preserved in any well-made anthology of English verse. There are more like it, though of late years he wrote little poetry.

But, of course, the distinction between criticism and creation is a shallow one. All first-rate critics are creators, of special value because no age can come to full flowering without them. At his best, as many an essay in this periodical can testify, Oscar Firkins was a great critic, for his ability to grasp essentials and by a startling brilliance of manner to illuminate the mind with fundamental truths.

In his last letter to me (in January of the present year) he described his present life as an "unquiet blur," though adding, not without "appreciated alleviations and exceptions." He was tired, his university work was nearly over, release was not unwelcome. "I do not think I shall live long," he said, at Christmas time, in a wistful moment of confession. Along with the keen brain went a tender, a loving heart. The wit, rapierlike as it flashed and darted, hid beneath it a well of feeling, a too facile exhibition of which he would have shrunk from. This shy, western American of deep New England rootage, with deep New England in his blood, cared greatly, in his odd way, for others. His work, rightly read, proves it. Association with him ratified it. I see him in character, now that he is gone, leaving some of us the lonelier, as a Chevalier Bayard; a brief, bright visitor to a world not quite fitted to be his habitat; an Ariel rather lost amidst the raucous streets. And I am sure that, coming to that Place the imaginations of human beings turn to, whether as wish-fulfilment or reality dimly descried, Oscar Firkins will say, "adsum," in a clear voice, and stand with brow unabashed, a "gentleman unafraid."

The Unabiding

By O. W. FIRKINS

THE Phidian Jove no age destroys;
The frustrate centuries look and pass;
That brow a world might fitly pose:
Where is the brow of Phidias?

The David stands, unbowed, unseered,
Nor time, the wrestler, lays him low;
Still is that arm for conquest reared:
Where is the arm of Angelo?

The Sistine, broodful in the skies,
Still treasures the effaceless spell;
Her heart is garnered in her eyes:
Where is the heart of Raphael?

Strange that mere earth outlives the heart,
The brow, the arm that made it live,
That souls can permanence impart
Whose breath and bloom is fugitive!

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The Bowling Green

Human Being

XIII. THE ATLAS

RICHARD'S earliest days at Erskine's were puzzled by his natural superstition that books were intended to be read. He took home Trade Order Lists and catalogues and wondered desperately how he would ever catch up with this enormous glut of literature which had been accumulating without his knowing anything about it. When he was given a list of remainders to be offered in bulk to various jobbers, he made a pathetic attempt to study the volumes themselves. But the mystic art of reading, a much rarer gift than might be supposed, was not natural to him. He could never accomplish it except when free from all distraction. He was instinctively alert in all personal relationships, but print was a foreign unreal medium in which he proceeded with difficulty. He was embarrassed by a native respectfulness toward books, a feeling that they are to be taken seriously. With growing perplexity he struggled through two or three mediocre novels, trying to justify to himself the adjectives printed on the jackets. Then he compromised by memorizing verbatim the descriptions given in the Erskine catalogue. He would hand the pamphlet to Lucille and ask her to "hear" him. When she read out some title, such as *Dinner at Seven,* he would reply "Sparkling comedy of bourgeois life." "What is burjoyce life?" was her natural inquiry. "It's some kind of print," he said, "I heard them talk about it in the manufacturing department. It's a small sort of type, I guess it means a story that tells about lower-case people." Lucille was not satisfied with this explanation, but she went on to another item. "*Acreage?*" she asked. "This novel of broad vision," he replied, "completes the author's triology of the Canadian granaries. It's a triple triology, that means a story in three volumes." Daisy Erskine, who wrote most of these catalogue notes, would have been thrilled if she knew how accurately Richard studied them—and how he wondered where she had learned so many difficult words. But it was the buyer for Remainder Outlets, Inc., who discouraged this habit. Richard had waited nervously a long while for an interview. When he took in his bag full of books he spread them out as alluringly as possible and began his carefully memorized descriptions.

"Listen, drummer," said the buyer, "you're wasting your time. There's only two things that interests me: can you make me a price, and is it a good-looking package?"

From that moment Richard began to be a valuable salesman. Though shy he soon learned to relish the hilarity of the office. Is it because the book business is one of small profits that it compensates itself in a large turnover of human comedy? The big main room was full of skirmishing typewriters, the incessant rattle of hammering keys and the zip of paper sheets pulled off the rollers, but those cheerful young women never seemed to be too busy for some floating jest. As you went down the middle aisle through the clatter of correspondence, there always seemed to be some elusive fragment of chaff passing to and fro. When Gene Vogelsang, a general favorite, passed through the office, there would be half a dozen oblique flashes of the eye here and there, half a dozen of those subtle instantaneous recognitions by which people convey to each other their mutual appreciation of some universal absurdity. Richard was at first somewhat startled by the offhand irreverent flavor of the Sales Department. Then he realized that in any business the salesmen have the privilege of the king's jester at court. They played endless practical jokes on one another. When Herman Schmaltz came in from his trip through the Middle West he left his portmanteau unlocked in the office for several hours before going home. At lunch time Gene Vogelsang and George Work happened to see a group of girls in the Mail Order department admiring some delicate peach-colored lingerie one of them had bought. They insisted on borrowing the garment and putting it in Herman's bag, where it was duly discovered when Herman got home and opened his portmanteau in triumph to show Hazel some trophy of his journey. Though Sam Erskine was a member of the firm even he was not exempt from these simple japes. One night there was a dinner of the salesmen at Mouquin's. Sam, who lived out of town, laid his watch on the table before him to be sure of catching the last train for Long Island. But as the wine circulated Sam's vigilance relaxed, and Richard was horrified to see that Vogelsang and Work, sitting on either side of the boss, were altering the timepiece. While Gene engaged Sam in talk, George would set the hands back. Presently Sam consulted his watch. "Only 10.30," he exclaimed, "fine! Let's have another bottle." Later on Gene winked to George, and this time the watch was put several hours ahead. "Gosh," Sam cried when he noticed it, "one o'clock! Well, the train's gone now, may as well make a night of it." The evening ended about two, with Sam running furiously toward Penn Station believing he was about to catch the 12.50.

When they first took the trouble to gull Richard he was wise enough to realize that it was really a social compliment and implied that he was accepted as one of the gang. Like all the most successful jokes it was completely idiotic and unexpected. He was checking up a count of some books in one of the stockroom bins when he heard a voice round the corner of the next aisle. It said: "What's the name of that queer-looking old coon in the shipping department?" To which another voice replied: "His name's Roe. Extraordinary old specimen, and all his family are just like him." Richard was caught off guard and looked round the corner, where he saw Gene and George grinning at him.

The pivot on whom the Sales Department really revolved was Miss McCoy, Sam Erskine's solid, middle-aged and competent secretary. She was always known as Miss Mac, for her given name, Birdie, was too grotesquely inappropriate to be employed face to face. In her was incarnate the traditional and proper attitude of satire which a Sales Department feels for the literary staff. Even Daisy Erskine hesitated to venture into the Trade Room when Miss Mac was present, for Miss Mac's comments though not very audible were annihilating. Grey haired and with an appearance of great firmness round the bust she sat very erect at her typewriter desk and answered two telephones in a calm competent voice. She wasted few words, and what she first approved in Richard was that she saw he also was a sparse talker. The boys had learned that any remark she meditated was usually withheld until she had finished the page she was typing. Her gray eyes, very large and clear behind glasses, shifted impassively between her notebook and the machine, with brief flashes toward anyone who was speaking. One had to wait until the page was complete. The boys always tilted their heads a little, for she spoke low. Then there was the rip of the paper pulled crisply from the carrier, and her comment followed immediately, dramatized and pointed by this sharp sound. Gene Vogelsang was particularly good at eliciting her best sayings. "I see Daisy has some fresh flowers on her desk this morning," he might say. Miss Mac, apparently paying no attention, would go on with her typing or telephone, quite unmoved. But as the pattering ceased Gene would cock his ear carefully. *Zip!* out came the sheet of paper, and as she methodically removed the carbon she would say "Johnny Jonquil must be in town. You better go out and sell some books." This was her name for a sentimental poet who had once brought Daisy an armful of flowers and had announced, in tones of innocent simplicity, "Jonquils for your equinox."

Miss Mac had observed that any call paid by authors upon Mrs. Erskine was usually followed almost at once by an inquiry to the Trade Room as to how many copies had been sold. In the case of Daisy's favorite poets this was often embarrassing. So Miss Mac had devised the stratagem of asking the poet to autograph a copy of his book for each of the salesmen. This distracted him from morbid inquiries, and the autographed copies were tossed into a bin underneath the display rack. As a matter of fact Miss Mac was herself a great reader, but (as Gene said) she didn't suffer over it the way Daisy does. Daisy's office was lined almost to the ceiling with autographed photos of authors; Miss Mac preferred as decoration a good lithographed advertising cut-out. But she always carried a book home with her at night in the subway, conscientiously turning the jacket inside out for she disliked to have other people know what she was reading. "I give Erskine's all my time in the office," she said. "I don't have to advertise their stuff for 'em in the subway." Richard soon learned that tips from Miss Mac were worth consideration.

It was a casual remark of Miss Mac's that first interested Richard in the only Erskine book he ever really studied with care. A new edition of the Erskine Atlas was in preparation, but before it came out it was desired to dispose of some lingering stock of the early issue. Richard, coming in to his desk in a corner of the Trade Room, found a memorandum from Sam instructing him to offer 1,500 copies of the old edition to a specialist in remainders. He hunted up a sample copy of the book and was examining it.

"That's the best book we ever published," said Miss Mac. "What you find in that book you can believe."

It was true. The Atlas had been the rock on which the business was really founded. Much money had been spent on it, the maps were really accurate and well printed. As Richard turned the pages Miss Mac left her typewriter and came to look over his shoulder.

"I never look at it without a thrill," she said calmly. Richard was astonished at the thought of the austere Miss Mac being thrilled by anything. She pointed to a double page chart of winds and ocean currents. "Just look at those names," she said. "Doesn't it make your blood move faster? Look at them! South-east Monsoon, Roaring Forties, Equatorial Current, Great Australian Bight! That's what I call poetry, not the stuff Johnny Jonquil writes. I can sit here in a corner of this dingy office and see green water and black weather go roaring across the world. That isn't just paper and blue ink, it's an ocean. Look at those lines of railroad running through the United States. Here's Cincinnati—I can see old Herman Schmaltz arriving at the station and going out to call on the trade. Those boys take it all for granted. When I ask Schmaltz whether the Middle West looks like other places he can't even answer me. My, what an education a travelling man could get if he kept his eyes open. Remember that, young fellow, when they send *you* on the road."

CHRISTOPHER MORLEY.

(*To be continued*)

"Some people," says the *Manchester Guardian,* "have been trying hard to celebrate the tercentenary of the birth of Samuel Pepys, on the ground that he was born on February 23, 1632, and that that must be three hundred years ago; and so widespread has this attempt been that the diarist's college of Magdalene at Cambridge has had to issue a statement to the press declaring that that learned house, at least, has never fallen into so gross and vulgar an error. For Pepys was born on February 23, 1632, Old Style."

*Ask Me Again!**

1. Where did Kubla Khan order a "stately pleasure dome?"
2. Who wrote "The King of the Golden Mountain?"
3. Who wrote "Flappers and Philosophers?"
4. What novelist has written a trilogy about life in medieval Norway?
5. Who wrote "The glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome?"
6. What well-known Spanish man of letters was made Ambassador to the United States immediately following the overthrow of the monarchy?"
7. Who wrote "The Decline of the West?"
8. What book is the champion "best-seller" every year?
9. What have the following in common: Scrooge, Pecksniff, Fagin, Micawber?
10. What American composer and poet collaborated to write the opera, "The King's Henchman?"
11. What poetess lived on Lesbos?
12. Who was the leader of the fallen angels in "Paradise Lost?"
13. Who was the first printer in England?
14. Who is the author of "The Road Back?"
15. Who wrote "The Lost World?"
16. What well-known American poet wrote many poems dealing with his experiences in hospital work during the Civil War?
17. Who wrote the words of the "Battle Hymn of the Republic?"
18. Who was the Reverend Charles Lutwidge Dodgson?
19. What is the "Song of Roland?"
20. Who is the present poet-laureate of Great Britain?
21. Complete the line: "One two, one two . . ."
22. Who wrote the poem containing the particular line: "The heathen Chinese is peculiar?"
23. Whose ambition was it to write a history of England which would fill the place of the latest novels on the dressing tables of the ladies?
24. What musical composer's name is associated with that of George Sand?
25. What is the name of the first of the Forsyte novels?

ANSWERS

1. At Xanadu.
2. John Ruskin.
3. Scott Fitzgerald.
4. Sigrid Undset—in "Kristin Lavransdatter."
5. Edgar Allan Poe.
6. Salvador de Madariaga.
7. Oswald Spengler.
8. The Bible.
9. They are characters in Dickens's novels.
10. Deems Taylor and Edna St. Vincent Millay.
11. Sappho.
12. Lucifer.
13. William Caxton (1422-1491).
14. Erich Maria Remarque.
15. A. Conan Doyle.
16. Walt Whitman.
17. Julia Ward Howe.
18. Lewis Carroll.
19. An old French epic which describes the struggle between the Christians and the Saracens.
20. John Masefield.
21. ". . . and through and through."
22. Francis Bret Harte.
23. Thomas B. Macaulay.
24. Frédéric F. Chopin.
25. "The Man of Property."

Hugh I'Anson Fausset, writing of Aldous Huxley's "Brave New World," says of the novelist: "He can only exploit his power destructively or as a means to exceedingly witty entertainment, as he does in this book. It fails both as satire and romance because it is controlled by no inward conviction. The dread of sentiment and the habit of disillusionment are too strong for him. It is easier to exploit the possibilities of mental death than to meet the demands of creative life."

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* The above test is compiled from "Ask Me Again!" edited by J. N. Leonard, and to be published on April 15 by the Viking Press.

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PROBLEMS OF SORTS

Liberal or Illiberal?

"YES, BUT—" The Bankruptcy of Apologetics. By WILLARD L. SPERRY. New York: Harper & Bros. 1931. $2.

Reviewed by HENRY SLOANE COFFIN

WHEN Professor William James died, his widow, in asking Dr. George A. Gordon to conduct the funeral, wrote him: "I want no hesitation or diluted utterance at William's funeral."

Dean Sperry's volume is a protest against the tendency in current religion to stand on the defensive. He pillories the believer who grudgingly changes his statement of his faith when advancing knowledge compels him, and keeps saying Yes, I grant this truth, *but* I can still hold fast to this much of the old creed. He scorns the timid religionist who tries to make his faith appear respectable by introducing it in good company: "Religion and Science," "Religion and Psychology," etc., He thinks we talk far too much about religion altogether. A healthy family do not discuss their mutual affection; they talk with one another about their mutual interests. The sign of disease in contemporary churches is the existence of "discussion-groups" where men and women talk about religion instead of speaking directly to God. The churches and Christian Associations are forever conducting "surveys" of their activities, instead of bending their energies to building the kingdom of God. "A summer of surveys is past, and we are not saved."

Dean Sperry's chief attack is upon liberal religion. Liberalism's essential faith is in man; liberal religion professes faith in God, but He is not its center of interest. There is a recurring protest in religion when theology overstates its doctrine of God; and the liberal movement of the last hundred or more years is a reaction from an exaggeration of the divine sovereignty which made men grovel before a celestial despot. The result, however, of liberal religion is humanism. This is not a prophetic movement pointing to a dawn, but the ringing down of the curtain on a liberal movement which has played its part. Thoughtful folk "feel racially very much alone in the universe." Modern social service no longer appeals to the younger generation, because it is uninspired: it is spent liberalism carrying on.

The hour demands a religion which turns outward, no longer speaking of "religious experience" and "the religious consciousness," and, facing the universe speaks to God. Dean Sperry calls this new attitude "illiberal liberalism!" It has humane sympathies and humanitarian hopes, but despairs of achieving these hopes unless they be "the cosmic intention." He finds three contemporary tendencies which face us in this same direction. The first is the present drift in the arts away from romanticism towards the contemplation of "parts fitly arranged in a symmetrical and unified whole." A second is the interest in the mysterious universe. An Einstein is a fervid humanitarian in his hatred of war, but his religion has nothing in common with humanism. A third is the ethics of dispassionateness for which Mr. Lippmann has pled, who, although often classed as a humanist, Dean Sperry finds in protest against that liberalism which overstresses the individual. While he does not mention Barthianism, the most talked-of theological movement in Protestant Europe, its whole aim is to center faith on a transcendent God and make man face Him and listen directly to Him. He sees signs of a fresh flood of religious interest not so much in the churches as in circles as yet unrelated to organized religion.

> What matters is not that we should say "God" too soon or too easily, what matters is that we should know that this is the one word above all others which any religion must utter and that we should be trying to learn how to say it.

Looking back at the origin of Christianity, the gospels mark one of those infrequent periods when the outward-turned mind and the inward-turned mind complemented each other perfectly. Our immaturity exaggerates either the objective or the subjective elements in religion. Jesus had both first-hand traffic with the Most High and insight into man's heart. We have to rethink the place of Jesus in his own religion. Dean Sperry is confident that it is not Jesus the supremely religious man alone, but Jesus the cosmic figure who has influenced Christianity. Christian piety finds in Jesus what artists call "a concrete universal," and his hope for a more adequate Christology is in theologians who stop going to school to science and go to school to art. While the author disappoints us in his final chapter by not attempting a statement of God in Christ who answers the need of our age, as this book so penetratingly diagnoses it, he concludes with his personal belief that Jesus remains and will remain controlling in the religion of the future. "If he does not control that life autocratically, he companions it constantly in memory and imagination." This does not mean that he will center the devotion of men upon himself. Claiming men's loyalty, he will turn it and pass it on as devotion to the eternal God.

Henry Sloane Coffin, who was at one time pastor of the Bedford Park Church, New York, and later of the Madison Avenue Church, is president of Union Theological Seminary. He has written much on religious subjects.

Current Opinions

THE RIDDLE OF ECONOMICS. By ELISHA E. GARRISON. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1932. $2.50.

Reviewed by N. S. B. GRAS
Harvard University

FOR centuries business men stuck to their last—the exchange of goods and services. They left the formulation of theories to Aristotle, the schoolmen, and professors of a later date. They have been content to stand aside while policies were being devised by others—churchmen in the Middle Ages and statesmen and politicians in the modern period. In the seventeenth century, however, Mun, Child, North, and others made their influence felt through their writings; and, of course, since that time business men have come periodically to the front in pamphlet or book. Some day we may have a treatise on the economic thoughts of business men, garnered from many sources. The writer of such a work would be most grateful for the book now under consideration.

In his "Riddle of Economics" Colonel Garrison reflects current business points of view. He believes in steady expansion, high wages, low prices, low unit profits, and stabilization. He would reduce politics to a minimum and develop international relationships. This is the new economic liberalism in which America has won its first real claim to leadership in business policy. The author reflects the confidence in self-guidance and benevolent management displayed by Ford, Swope, Young, Proctor, and Dennison.

Some of the specific recommendations are both interesting and valuable, notably a federal tax commission, the election of representatives without regard to residence, an international gold reserve, and an international economic rather than political league.

It is for practical policies rather than logical exposition that this work is valuable. The author has not followed in the footsteps of Ricardo who was both business man and economic theorist. He is an example of one self-trained in economics, who is trying to think creatively. But he is trying to be constructive without first having become critical. There are two intellectual tyrannies—the overwrought science well tested but remote from experience, and the simple expression of ideas inadequately formulated. The author seems to be subconscious of the latter and fights against it, but in vain. And yet he has written a book that is as refreshing and suggestive on the side of business policy as it is immature and inadequate on the side of economic theory. When a business man undertakes such a task as this, it would be better for him to dwell upon policy, in which he is likely to make some contribution, and leave alone economic theory, in which he can hardly expect to be very helpful.

N. S. B. Gras is professor of business history at Harvard University. Among his books are "An Introduction to Economic History" and "A History of Agriculture in Europe and America."

Case for Independence

PHILIPPINE UNCERTAINTY. By HARRY B. HAWES. New York: The Century Co. 1932. $3.

Reviewed by HENRY KITTREDGE NORTON

SENATOR HAWES, in his study of the Philippine problem, adds to the plea of the political advocate the analysis of the student of politicis. The two roles are so gracefully intertwined that one must be continually on guard lest one confuse the emotional exhortations of the one with the informed judgments of the other.

The opening sentence of his book is not encouraging. The Senator frankly states that "one of the causes, though not the chief cause, for this book was irritation." His irritation in this case was with those who had testified before his committee that the Filipinos did not want independence. The Senator went to the islands to see if this were true. There is ample evidence in the volume that the Senator is human, and it is very human under such circumstances that he should have found overwhelming evidence of the unanimous desire of the Filipinos for independence. To be sure, he tells of one occasion on which a man in the crowd shouted that if they found anybody who was not for independence they would kill him, but in spite of that the Senator is convinced that everybody in the islands spontaneously and fervently yearns for freedom from American rule.

Of course this conclusion is at variance with that of numerous students of the question who have investigated it without irritation. But all previous writers are easily disposed of with the sweeping statement that "the full, naked truth about the Philippines has not heretofore been given to the American people."

We should have more assurance of the validity of the Senator's conclusions if it were not for his tendency to weep when little children spelled out the word "independence" in their dances and a still less commendable readiness to accept the assurance of Manuel Roxas and Sergio Osmeña that the Filipinos and the Moros "could compose their religious divergences more readily without than with American interposition." Roxas and Osmeña are honorable men, but they happen to be among those chiefly suspected of a personal interest in the movement for independence.

Senator Hawes frequently draws the analogy between the Filipino independence movement and our own pre-revolutionary longings, as does Senator Borah in his foreword. The multitude of tribal languages does not impress him as a deterrent. This multitude is due largely to Dean Worcester's craving to discover new dialects, which led that widely recognized authority to split up what is in reality a strikingly homogeneous people into innumerable non-communicating tribes. And besides, "all of our own ancestors, no matter from what part of Europe they came, were originally descendants of a tribe or a clan. The American Indians were separated into many tribes with different dialects, but they all came from one stock—they were all Indians."

The Senator's analysis would seem to lead him to the conclusion that therefore the Indians were qualified to operate a modern democracy. But he skirts around that absurdity and comes to the conclusion instead that the Filipinos, not being divided into tribes any more than were the American Indians or our own prehistoric ancestors, are therefore qualified for democratic government.

Having made much of the identity of aspiration between the Filipino independence movement and our own, our author brings the analogy down to date by protesting that "the United States, the greatest democracy in the present or the past, can scarcely be less liberal to the people of the Philippines than Great Britain is to the inhabitants of Canada, Australia, South Africa, and Ireland." Yet the Senator himself notes on the same page that the latter "are bound to the mother country by ties of race, blood heredity, and tradition—bonds utterly lacking in the relationship between us and the Filipinos."

Another of his own observations seems too lightly considered, despite its high authority.

> We found that Providence had differentiated the Oriental fruits from the Occidental: they were as different as the men and the women of the Eastern world and the Western. Incidentally, the choicest fruits of the United States have been transplanted to the Philippines by agricultural experts, but, with rare exceptions, they are failures. The same may be said of certain of our grains and vegetables. In some sections corn does well, but potatoes grow into luxuriant foliage, and nothing more.

Democracy is one of the choice fruits of Western civilization. Is it possible that in the Philippines it, too, might "grow" into luxuriant foliage and nothing more"?

The Senator's affirmations that the islanders are ready for self-government are not wholly convincing, and his reiteration of the argument that we "promised" the Filipinos independence in the preamble of the Jones Act adds nothing to the inherent weakness of that argument. The Senator concentrates his fire on the fact that the preamble is as good a place as any for such a "promise." He overlooks the fact that there was no promise, even in the preamble. Congress merely stated its policy at the moment, adding, with doubtful accuracy, that that had always been the policy of the United States. That policy was to grant independence as soon as the Filipinos had established a stable government.

⁂ ⁂

This policy has much to commend it, but it is not a "promise" of anything. But Senator Hawes feels that the Filipinos look upon it as such, and therefore we are morally bound to grant them independence. He feels quite differently about other promises. "Certain sentimentalists and opponents of independence exaggerate what they call our promise to the Moros. There never was any promise to the Moro people; it was a promise to the Sultan." And when Aguinaldo, the head of the Philippines revolt in 1901, accepted the sovereignty of the United States throughout the archipelago, without any reservation whatsoever, that acceptance bound "only him—not all the Filipinos of his own and every succeeding generation."

And Senator Hawes, referring to the investment of capital in the islands, elsewhere says: "Surely a mere statement by Congress, subject, as it would be, to repeal by succeeding Congresses, would not be a guarantee sufficient to justify a large investment anywhere."

Similar doubts assail the reader as the Senator disposes in the same conclusive way of the vexed questions of the economics of an independent government, of the import of capital, and of the menace to international peace involved in the issue of independence. The latter the Senator touches very lightly, leaving Aguinaldo, in a letter dated July 25, 1931, to dispose of the "Japanese menace."

> With respect to the oft-repeated Japanese menace. I would state that Japan has a noble role to play in this part of the globe as a nation which is at the vanguard of the other nations of the Far East. It would be a dark day for Oriental peoples if Japan would seek to impose her sovereignty on every (any?) one of them.

The dark days seem to be upon us. Senator Hawes's book brightens it some. It is an excellent presentation for those who are already wholeheartedly of the Senator's point of view. Others will find in it excellent material for judging the strength of the case for independence.

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Round about Parnassus

By WILLIAM ROSE BENÉT

SEA CHANTEYS

I WELCOME the receipt of *High Mowing,* by Marion Canby, published by the Houghton Mifflin Company, but owing to the fact that Mrs. Canby is the wife of Henry Seidel Canby, the editor of this journal, her book will be reviewed by another hand. Among the books on my desk, David W. Bone's *Capstan Bars,* with woodcuts by Freda Bone, coming from Harcourt, Brace and Company, is no mere anthology of sea chanteys, but a book of running comment upon the history of the most famous of such songs, with an appendix and a glossary of sea-terms. Here is everything one could wish to know concerning the working songs of sailors aboard ship. Much fascinating ship lore is included. Captain Bone was eminently fitted to assemble this book as his knowledge of the sea is long and comprehensive and he is one of the mariners of England who possess the true gift of writing.

LOCAL COLOR

A peculiar little book is *Love in Manhattan,* by Don Wahn (Liveright, Inc.) who, in real life, is Philip Stack long a contributor, to Walter Winchell's column, of sonnets and poems of love. The merit of these efforts, between book-covers, is seen to be merely average for journalistic verse, though an occasional humorous turn is not uncommendable. *The Southwest Scene* is an anthology of regional verse edited by B. A. Botkin and published by the Economy Company, Oklahoma City. Since it contains poems by such recognized poets as John McClure, Muna Lee, Stanley Vestal, Witter Bynner, Alice Corbin, John Gould Fletcher, and Haniel Long, it may be ranked above the average of such collections of regional poetry. But in general I am averse to these compilations. They do present certain characteristics of the territory of which they treat and are thus of interest to native sons and daughters. But the outside world likes its anthologies (and the fewer the better) more comprehensive in scheme. Many poems are written full of "local color" that cannot pass muster in a truly selective volume. The regional anthologist usually ends by mixing the good with the mediocre if not bad, and the result is a sort of patchwork-quilt where certain hues stand out brightly against others quite sombrely dull.

PASCAL D'ANGELO

The recent death in terrible privation of Pascal d'Angelo, known as the "pick and shovel poet" must have struck to the hearts of those who first discovered the fine work of this laboring Italian in the old days, about ten years ago. Macmillan, as I remember, published his book. Carl Van Doren and others commended it. D'Angelo also published an autobiographical volume. He was the sensation of a season in poetry. Now he is dead because he tried to devote himself to poetry solely, and poetry has but rarely helped anyone to any of the world's goods. D'Angelo had led a hard-toiling life. His imagination had raised him from the ruck. He had studied poetry diligently, he had accomplished something. If he never reached the goal he set himself he, at least, fought upward against almost insurmountable obstacles. The *Brooklyn Eagle* is, as I write, taking up a subscription for his burial so that he may not rest in the Potter's Field. His last word was for the preservation of his poems, and I understand that he left a sheaf of them behind him which should certainly be sifted by the proper hands. Perhaps a worthy posthumous book may result. I hope so, because I truly believe that, in moments, this lowly Italian laborer showed the real spark. He had his true dæmon. He fell in bitter times of unemployment.

A PROMISING NEWCOMER

Dennis Murphy, still in his twenties, is a newcomer in the ranks of contemporary poetry, and his publishers, The Kaleidoscope Publishers of 701 North Vernon Street, Dallas, Texas, are certainly anything but well-known. *Boy with a Silver Plow* was chosen in a state-wide contest conducted in Missouri by the Wednesday Club of Saint Louis, with John G. Neihardt, the well-known Western poet, as judge, from one hundred and seventy-six manuscripts submitted. The late Vachel Lindsay remarked upon their excellent craftsmanship, and Lew Sarett has said, "Dennis Murphy writes with sincerity, insight, and sympathy of the Ozark hills and their folk." His first book is certainly above the average run. It begins with a hint here of Housman and a hint there of Yeats, but it develops its own idiom. It becomes endemic. It is sincere work with occasional lines of persuasive beauty and with an atmosphere of its own. One would think that the phenomenon of a farmer plowing had been described sufficiently to make any new portrayal stale. And yet it repays us to read Murphy's "To an Old Farmer Plowing," which follows:

Bending against a strip of crimson sky
And gripping both plow handles, he remains
Bound to his narrow land. All day he strains
And tugs, turning four corners wearily.
Behind him only sullen furrows lie
Where blackbirds follow, croaking grey refrains;
Before him lathered loins in strong trace-chains
Sweat through hard toil to leave the land laid by.
Plow deep, O farmer, heavily and deep!
Fly lightly, blackbirds, following each round!
You are the brave who plow but barely reap;
You are the true that mourn. Farmers are brave
Who only break themselves in breaking ground;
Blackbirds are true that follow to the grave.

The less dutiful side of the picture is displayed in a particularly lovely lyric which is number II of the very first section of the book:

He left his horses standing
Hitched to the clumsy plow
And ran to the wild crab apple
And broke a silver bough.

What if his team is standing—
What if it stand till doom?
Maybe there's more than color
In a wild crab apple bloom.

Mr. Murphy cannot be said to have any great range as yet, but this is a promising first book. I wish the poet Godspeed.

Below are listed other volumes I have received which will not be given further notice in this department:

Surf. By Paul Sumner Nickerson. Portland: The Mosher Press.
By Way of the Sky. By Elizabeth Warren Jones. Dorrance.
Wednesday Club Verse. A. C. Clayton Publishing Co., St. Louis.
Night Song. By Roydon Burke. Boston: Bruce Humphries .
Green Persimmons. By Richard Campbell Pettigrew. Salisbury, N. C.
Gleams. Lyrics and Sonnets by Edward Doyle. New York: Neale.
Contours. By Joy Gerbaulet. Author: New York.
Devotions in Profile. By C. N. Wenger. Boston: Stratford.
Ballades and Idylls. By Ernest McGaffey. Los Angeles: Saturday Night Publishing Company.
Life's Worth Living. By Charles Bancroft. Author.
Earth-Child. By Jane Groome Love. The Kaleidoscope Publishers, Dallas, Texas.
Counting Sheep. By Sallie M. Sefrit. New York: Henry Harrison.
More Truth Than Poetry. By Julian Snow. Pioneer Printing Company, Cheyenne, Wyo.
Songs of a Soldier. By William V. V. Stephens. Banner Press, Emory Univ., Ga.
Santiago Poems. By Herbert Wickenheisen, Boston: Stratford.

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Here is a BOOK

THE shrill voices of the literary faddists fade into an embarrassed silence as Lewisohn booms forth his judgments. "Expression in America" is not mere literary history. Lewisohn refuses to look upon literature as a polite art which has stewed in its own forms while philosophy and politics and science have progressed. He attempts in this book to demonstrate the organic relationship between American literature and the American social body—not a mere economic or moral or esthetic relationship, but one which seems to touch the ethnic bedrock of American life. As a result, "Expression in America" is the most important book on American art offered to the American people in a number of years. It is safe to say, I think, that its importance will not be challenged for a long while.—WILLIAM SOSKIN in the *New York Evening Post.*

THIS enlightening and refreshing survey of our life and letters is the work of a distinguished mind and a passionately honest heart enamored of beautiful things. It contains hundreds and hundreds of perfect phrases which I have delightedly underscored in my copy. Many sustained passages are wise and eloquent, so rich that they seem final and leave nothing more, certainly nothing better, for anybody to say. The inward form which gives it essential unity is a passion for liberty of the spirit; this passion makes some of the writing incandescent. He often exemplifies and demonstrates the high qualities that he proclaims, and his enthusiasms for lovely and noble ideas make his style glow and keep him from being a mere cold, judicial critic. His passion for lofty and liberating thoughts is magnificent.—JOHN MACY in the *Saturday Review of Literature.*

THIS is a book which I shall turn over to my son with the suggestion that, if he finds it as interesting as I do, he can toss all the other books about American literature he has been reading in school into the ashcan.—BURTON RASCOE in the *New York Sun.*

IN this glowing account of America's coming of age Lewisohn returns to the field in which he is perhaps without a peer today. Who else is so saturated in the great tradition of English literature, yet reads his contemporaries with so fresh and appreciative a mind? Who else has so triumphant a faith that literature is the supreme expression and the essential glory of every age; who writes a prose at once so intellectually precise and so emotionally aglow? Lewisohn has yet another qualification of the great critic: he is not afraid to stand alone. His book is the expression of a sensitive, alert, individual mind. He writes with the freshness of individual discovery and individual experience on every page.—LEWIS GANNETT in the *New York Herald Tribune.*

SO fine a study of the creative spirit in America that it becomes an act of creation itself. It makes you want to read and re-read books which have been saluted heretofore in press notices and quick reviews. I cannot think at the moment of a story of American literature which comes within a hundred miles of this in stature and scope.—GILBERT SELDES.

LUDWIG LEWISOHN

HE is bi-lingual, and his English prose flows like a beautiful river. He has been an avid student of literature in all lands; and it is mainly through literature that he discovers us, reveals us to ourselves, and draws conclusions that are at once pertinent and iconoclastic. This attitude is generous and at the same time just. He conforms to no standards that have been rigidly laid down. He is, in a word, unafraid. And for this let us thank him on our knees.—CHARLES HANSON TOWNE in the *New York American.*

THIS book sweeps American literature and life together as no other book has done; not even Parrington's "Main Currents." It stands alone. "Expression in America" is a coherent whole. It is not, Lewisohn says, "in any hitherto accepted sense, a history of literature." Not in the sense current in the academies, to be sure, for it is free from the dead apparatus of names, dates, lists of works which mark like tombstones the professors' histories. But it is a history of literature in America, and more; it is a history of the spirit of America. And a triumphant history.—OPINION.

THE best and most interesting book of criticism of American writing I ever had read. And though I think that he hath prejudices and predilections that colour his views of many writers, I doubt that criticism of any other sort is worth a whoop. And in the book is what I take to be an honesty and integrity that few human beings possess.—FRANKLIN P. ADAMS.

HE knows literature because he has loved it, and he is fascinated by the great figures because of his concern with what they have to say. Hence he treats the best of them as though they were his contemporaries, and he is really concerned only with that part of them which is still living in the sense that it still raises living issues. . . . Mr. Lewisohn's book is profoundly interesting. No matter whom he is discussing he reveals both an ever delightful shrewdness and a fine sensitivity so that almost every page is studded with the brilliant *aperçus.* I know no other book on American literature more genuinely stimulating. To read it is to share the adventure of one discriminating soul among our native masterpieces.—JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH.

TO the vast majority who feel that literature is definitely allied to life, this book will open one of the most exhilarating adventures into the lands of criticism that has been afforded them in a long time. A beautiful book, beautiful for the prose it contains, but more so for the spirit which it shows. It is a challenge to all who read books by Americans, to those who teach our children or publish our books, to everyone who has anything to do, however remotely, with literature. It is also a challenge to those who, from whatever angle, believe in the good life.—KARL SCHRIFTGIESSER in the *Boston Evening Transcript.*

LAST year such a volume would have been priced at $5. Today we are glad to be able to publish "Expression in America," at $4. Published on March 9th, "Expression in America" is now in its 3rd printing. Royal Octavo, bound in black cloth, stamped in blue and gold, 624 pages, indexed, printed in 14 point Cloister old style type on India laid antique paper. It may be obtained from your bookseller, or from the publisher.—HARPER & BROTHERS, 49 East 33rd Street, New York City.

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A Letter from London

By MRS. BELLOC LOWNDES

I HAD the great pleasure and privilege of seeing Mr. George Moore on the eve of his eightieth birthday. He was one of a number of writers gathered together at the opening by the Prince of Wales of the charming "Age of Walnut" loan exhibition, which will run for some weeks at Sir Philip Sassoon's London house. Mr. Moore looks better and younger than he did some years ago, and he is actually at work on a new novel which he pretends he hopes will be his last. I gather the story is laid in the England of forty to fifty years ago, and will not be of what is now considered full novel length. He told me of an incident which is to figure in a certain scene of his story, the details of which were clear in my mind. I said to him, "You did not tell me of this incident when we last spoke of your story." He chuckled as he answered, "I only thought of it last night!" It is curious that a man with so extraordinary, vivid, and fertile an imagination should declare that "Memory is the Mother of the Muses." I cannot help thinking that all writers who do me the honor of reading this Letter will feel both delighted and relieved to hear that though when George Moore came out of a nursing home after a serious operation two years ago, the doctors told him that his memory, as well as other intellectual faculties, was bound to fail, in a measure, after such an illness as he had had, he actually began at once rewriting "Aphrodite in Aulis," that now most perfectly written book! Even more remarkable in some ways is the fact that he has again attacked what can only be regarded as a study of modern love and life, for such undoubtedly will be the book on which he is now working.

To return to the "Age of Walnut," even there, as indeed with almost everything connected with the wondrous past, literature, if not in one form, then in another, is always breaking in. Thus, among the silver shown is a beautiful silver rose-water dish and ewer which belonged to Pepys, and in which, as he was certainly physically a very clean man, we may be sure he very often laved his hands. Pepys must have had a pretty fancy in silver and silver-gilt, for there are two other objects which belonged to him—a two-handled gilt cup and cover and a silver-gilt tazza.

At a time when every French child trembled at the name of "Malbrouck," as in days to come every British child was to be threatened with the spectre of "Boney," there ran across the continent of Europe a rumor that the Duke of Marlborough had been killed at Malplaquet. From that rumor was born one of the great ballads of the world: *"Mal-brouck s'en va-t-en guerre,"* still sung in French nurseries to its famous tune. A leading fan painter of the day had time, before the tale was known to be untrue, to paint and make a replica of Marlborough's funeral! One of these fans passed into the possession of Queen Louise of Prussia. The other made its way to England, and is in the exhibition. It shows the great soldier's coffin, preceded and followed by his staff. Under the bier runs his spaniel. At the back of the fan are inscribed not only the twenty-two couplets celebrating the hero's decease, but also several bars of the tune. Yet another exhibit which may perhaps not be regarded as appertaining to literature, but which would certainly delight any autograph collector, is an I. O. U. written by Charles the Second at Brussels. This curious piece of paper is lent by a descendant of the man to whom the I. O. U. was made out, this having been the royal debtor's good friend, Sir Michael Graham.

What is the best training for a novelist? That surely is a question of great interest to both critics and writers. Again and again it seems to me to have been proved that the best training of all for the aspiring creative artist in words is that acquired in practical journalism.

The latest example of this fact, if it be a fact, in this country is that of Kate O'Brien, whose novel, "Without My Cloak," surely shows that a new novelist in this great tradition has been revealed. I understand that Miss O'Brien came from Ireland straight to the *Manchester Guardian,* where she worked under the late C. E. Montague, a great journalist and a novelist of distinction, as all those who have read "A Hind Let Loose" will agree. Then she spent a certain time in Paris as a special correspondent, came back to England, and wrote a play, "Distinguished Villa," earning her livelihood, meanwhile, as a journalist. She is now engaged on another novel dealing, it is said, with the same group of characters which so impressed the imaginations of her readers in "Without My Cloak."

Another new writer recently launched by Messrs. Heinemann, is the author of that curious, original, novel, "The Whicharts." Miss Noel Streatfeild is the daughter of the late Bishop of Chichester, hence perhaps the reason for her going to the Apocrypha for the title of her next book, which is to be called "Because of Barouch." At one time many British novelists searched the Bible for titles. In fact, the Bible and Shakespeare were the favorite hunting grounds of Victorian story writers. It need hardly be added that they are rich treasure houses of brilliant, descriptive phrases, especially the kind of phrase that tells far more than the mere words appear to imply.

One of the shrewdest women of her time, that Charlotte, Princess Palatine, who was a sister-in-law of Louis the Fourteenth, and who left by far the most vivid and occasionally Rabelaisian, account of the Versailles of her day, once said in old age that she now knew all written history to be one long lie. I have sometimes wondered how far that is true concerning much which was and is now being written concerning the private lives of the great literary figures of the past. In "The Laird of Abbotsford" Dame Una Pope-Hennessy has discovered new material which gives the lie direct to all that Lockhart implied, in his great biography, concerning Walter Scott's wife. In Dame Una's book "little French Charlotte" comes alive as a very different sort of person from what I, for one, supposed her to have been. Her son-in-law, being traditional in that, if in nothing else, evidently hated his wife's mother. Scott's latest biographer regards "The Bridal of Triermain" as an autobiographical poem. If that be true, and she gives good reasons for her belief, then away fly the pathetic, sentimental tales of his early love affairs, and it is proved, for aye, that the woman he loved with passion, and over long years, was none other than his own wife. "The Laird of Abbotsford" contains other new facts which will interest Scotsmen all over the world.

A London publisher justly famed for picking out, as if by some strange instinct, not only big sellers, but fine first novels, tells me that he is enraptured with a manuscript which has just reached him entitled, "Nymph Errant." The author, James Laver, startled and delighted at any rate a section of the reading world with an amusing, daring *pastiche* of "The Rape of the Lock," called "A Stitch in Time." Copies of the large, but only limited edition published at 3/6d, (a little under a dollar, old rate,) at once became worth seven times as much in the second-hand market. This was not because the price was forced up by those who wanted to keep it with a view to profit, but because purchasers wanted to read it.

The book to which I personally look forward most of all this next autumn will be "The Letters of D. H. Lawrence," edited by Aldous Huxley. The two volumes will contain 350,000 words, and will cover the whole of Lawrence's far too short life. The great novelists of the world have often been great letter-writers as well as prolific story tellers. This was certainly true of Flaubert—some of the most delightful letters in the French language are those he addressed to George Sand when they were both well on in years. Among contemporary writers Arnold Bennett was a prodigious letter-writer. He really seemed to delight in using his pen, and would write to complete strangers as well as to intimate friends with reckless prodigality.

The second volume of Sir William Rothenstein's "Men and Memories" is to deal with more writers than did his first really delightful book. Wells, Conrad, Hudson, Galsworthy, W. H. Davies, James Stephens, and Max Beerbohm, who to my mind is an even better writer than artist, will all be mentioned, and not only mentioned, as is too much the habit nowadays, but revealed in their manner as they worked and talked.

Apropos of forthcoming books of memoirs, a volume which will arouse delightful anticipation in, I cannot help thinking, many American as well as British readers, will be shortly published by Major Maurice Baring. In my opinion the book will suffer a serious disability from its title. Though in a sense a "follow-up" to "The Puppet Show of Memory," which contained one of the best accounts of a delightful childhood ever written, it is to be called "Lost Lectures!" To all people the word "lecture" connotes something serious, and to a great number of people something dull. It would be interesting to know whether misguided publisher or misguided author was responsible for this extraordinary choice of title. Fortunately, books often suffer a sea change, and I cannot help thinking that the American publisher of the book will find some title really descriptive of its amusing contents.

We quote the following from the prospectus of the forthcoming Malvern Festival in England:

"For the second time we survey English drama down the centuries gaining in the space of one week a slender but continuous outline of its development since Tudor days. The only one of these plays performed in our "Five Centuries of English Drama" last year is "Ralph Roister Doister." Each performance of it this time will be preceded by "The Play of the Wether," a semi-pagan Interlude which takes the place of last year's morality, "Hick Scorner." Then, in nightly succession, we pass from that satirical comedy "The Alchemist," more widely known as literature than as a stage piece, to the tragedy of "Oroonoko," which saw over a dozen revivals during the eighteenth century, but which has not been performed in a public theatre since 1829. In 1695, when "Oroonoko" was written, the English Colonies had grown sufficiently established for London dramatists to take note of them; so here, with the action laid in the West Indies of that day, we can watch the life and behavior of planters and buccaneers nearly a hundred years before the United States proclaimed the Declaration of Independence. A generation later, and we are well into that eighteenth century which enjoyed "Oroonoko" so much, and shall see on the Thursday night what it could do for itself. Tom Thumb the Great with masterpieces of burlesque by the great novelist Fielding, and in 1780, just fifty years after its first presentation in London, a comic opera of the same name, and based upon it, was given at Covent Garden. The songs and music from this will be incorporated in the production of "Tom Thumb" at the Malvern Festival. On Friday we approach our grandparents' days with "London Assurance." Finally, to crown the whole series, comes the new play by Bernard Shaw."

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The New Books

The books listed by title only in the classified list below are noted here as received.

Fiction

THIS CIRCLE OF FLESH. By LLOYD MORRIS. Harpers. 1932. $2.50.

Very little can be said for this cinematic novel of New York life, except that it is dashingly conceived and competently executed. This may seem a great deal, but it is less than nothing in the face of the claims made for it by its jacket.

Aimed straight at Hollywood, it will only be a short time before Constance Bennett is recreating the languid elegance of Cherry Driscoll, and Clark Gable the dashing Raeland Warren. Nor is this denigration, for we have here all the apparatus of the society movie—the luxurious apartments, the formal dinners, the Harlem parties, the city administration scandals, the charming adultery, the elegant depravity, the witty (*sic*) repartee, the discontented wife, and the brilliant, cynical, and wealthy novelist whose ideas, when set forth before us, seem so strangely banal.

This is Hollywood's meat—but with a difference; in the pages of the novel, Raeland Warren does not sleep with Cherry Driscoll. Hollywood will have to find a way.

GLORY. By NAN BAGBY STEPHENS. Day. 1932. $2.50.

The tradition of the Southern romantic novel goes on in blackface in this first book, "Glory," by Nan Bagby Stephens, who sees the surface of the Negro shanty as clearly as Thomas Nelson Page saw the surface of the big house. But Mr. Page had a great advantage in the matter of time. Unfortunately Miss Stephens writes in a day when it is difficult to understand in either white belle or black the utter helplessness of the virgin in the old romantic story of virtue besieged.

Her story is the melodramatic tragedy of Southern Negro lovers whose love is broken by the lecherous power of a dominating Negro preacher. Under the cover of religion, he destroys the character of the boy and debauches the girl. She dies in her devoted older sister's arms of hunger and shame after flight in shame to Atlanta. The sister, who had loved the preacher, returns to denounce him in the church. Yet afterwards, when the preacher, penitent, throws himself at her feet, she would have saved him if she could from the truly Anglo-Saxon fury of the Negro mob.

In her descriptive passages and particularly in her description of the dramatic service at the church in which the preacher is denounced Miss Stephens shows real ability. Her chief fault lies in writing of Negroes in an attitude shaped by white condescension and white sentimentality. She endows her dark characters with Victorian morality, but she makes them take part in comedy, such as Negro misunderstanding of strange words, which is very close to the Amos and Andy variety. All in all, one is forced to dissent from the verdict of Dubose Heyward, himself the author of the finest book on the American Negro yet written, who gives the book the unqualified imprimatur of his appreciation.

FLESH IS HEIR. By LINCOLN KIRSTEIN. Brewer, Warren & Putnam. 1932. $2.50.

Lincoln Kirstein's first novel should command attention on several scores: it is an entirely original piece of work, it is consistently graced by a fresh and interesting viewpoint, it is one more voice in the rapidly swelling chorus of new writers who have grown dissatisfied with the novel of disillusionment and bitterness. While it is more distinguished in its intentions than in its achievement, it will find its place as a milestone along the obviously changing path of American literary opinion.

In its barest essentials, the story is concerned with Roger Baum's attempts to orientate himself in a world he feels offers no ready-made balance to the individual. To demonstrate the steps in his hero's self-orientation, Mr. Kirstein has rather arbitrarily chosen situations which seem cut and dried in the extreme. Rather than allow them to represent the inevitable outgrowth of his hero's progression through his environment, he seems to have deliberately confronted Roger with them—fear, work, decadence, the disappearance of beauty, the power of a philosophy of action. Thus neither Roger nor his associates achieve solid stature, but seem to present the cardboard dimensions of stylized figures. The author may well have deliberately sought this stylization (which seems the outcome of basing a novel on an idea rather than on a background of emotion), but if he has, he has done his very creditable talents a distinct disservice. For while he has definitely ruled out the realistic and naturalistic approaches, he has chosen an older and possibly more difficult vantage-ground—a background of romantic excitement. The characters which appear against such a scene require to be full-bodied and vital—not two-dimensional presentiments of a philosophic attitude.

PHILLIPINE. By MAURICE BEDEL. Translated by SAMUEL MIDDLEBROOK. Dutton. 1932. $2.50.

M. Bedel, who will be remembered for his delightful, frothy, farcical romances, "Jerome, or The Latitude of Love" and "Molinoff, or the Count in the Kitchen" has written another book in the same vein, though not with quite the same skill. It is concerned with M. Grenadier, a *bourgeois gentilhomme* who, on retiring from business with a fortune, buys a magazine and fancies himself as a politico-literary figure. He cherishes the enormous admiration for Mussolini that one is apt to find in captains of industry who can so easily conceive themselves as godlike dictators; and he provides matter for the book by visiting Italy to report at first hand to his readers on the glories of authority. He takes with him his daughter Philippine, who has much the same devastating effect on the virtuous, philoprogenitive Fascist society as Zuleika Dobson on the celibate community of Oxford. M. Grenadier himself is at every turn insulted, fined, detained, and finally deported as an anti-Fascist suspect, on the most flimsy accidental grounds; but through it all he preserves his unshakable admiration for the uniforms and discipline of the police who are ill using him.

There is plenty of material here for one of the author's best extravaganzas; but not much is made of it. The book is fairly entertaining throughout, and has some excellent things in it, but on the whole it is far inferior to its author's earlier novels. The reason plainly is that M. Bedel is deeply opposed to Fascism; and a violent conviction of any kind is fatal to the soap-bubble world that he achieved in his other books, and seems to be trying for in this. The depth of his conviction robs him of the Gallic balance which was so noteworthy in "Molinoff," where the *nouveaux riches* and the decayed royalists were each made to set off the follies of the other group; and it makes the book a little too savage for fun. The *bourgeois gentilhomme* is a figure about whom we are more tender-hearted than our ancestors; we do not like to see him ridiculed for trying to make up for his disadvantages, no matter how mistakenly; and the sight of a respectable *rentier* undergoing insult and liking it is material for bitter satire, but not for the gay romance M. Bedel has tried to make of it. *On ne badine pas avec la haine, non plus qu'avec l'amour;* but that is what M. Bedel has tried to do.

THE HOUSE OF WIVES. By ELIZABETH HAMILTON HERBERT. Farrar & Rinehart. 1932. $2.

Lightness and intelligence are seldom partners in the novel, even in satire, which is usually either smart-aleck or indignant. "The House of Wives" has both; and the swiftness and sanity they bring enables it at once to be gently sentimental and to avoid the sentimentality of falsification. Sometimes close to being a mere syllabub, it is never fatuous.

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(*Continued on page* 626)

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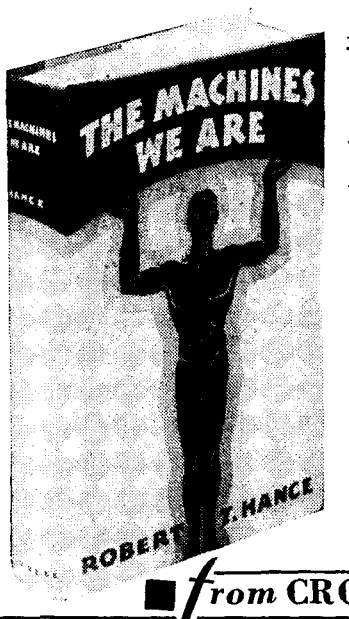

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THE RATS OF NORWAY

by J. Keith Winter

Points of View

Copyright Advancement

To the Editor of *The Saturday Review:*
Sir:

The development of our copyright legislation during nearly one and a half centuries which have elapsed since the enactment of our first Federal statute of May 31, 1790, has, unhappily, not been due primarily to a growth in our understanding and application of the principles which should govern international copyright relations and the right protection of intellectual productions.

It has been our boast that the United States was the first nation that ever embodied the principle of protection to the rights of authors in its fundamental law. But while our Constitution granted to Congress in 1787 the power to secure to authors the exclusive right to their writings, Congress, only three years later, in our very first copyright enactment which extended to authors, citizens of the United States, the exclusive right to print, publish, and vend their books, provided that nothing in that Act should be construed to prohibit the importation, reprinting, publishing, and selling within the United States of works "written, printed or published by any person not a citizen of the United States in foreign parts or places to agree to fill any order for it within ten days at a price equivalent to the foreign price plus transportation charges and custom's duties."

In that event such individual may order the copy directly. But the American student who sees the announcement of an English book which he desires to buy could not order it directly from London. He must first take the trouble to ascertain whether the book has been reprinted in the United States and if it has been duly deposited and registered. He may then send an order for it to the American publisher of the reprint and must wait ten days to ascertain whether the latter will decline to supply the book or simply neglect his order. In either case, whether his order is refused or discourteously ignored, he may order the copy from abroad. But the American publisher is permitted, when proposing to publish an American edition of an English book, to send notice to the customs authorities of that fact and to request the prohibition of importation of copies of the original edition. It seems probable that our would-be bookbuyer may fail to secure his English book after all his efforts. It will be impossible for postmasters and customs officials to recognize a permitted importation from one which is prohibited. It would be legislation not equitably enforceable and should be eliminated. It would seem that the individual bookbuyer's present privilege under the copyright act of 1909 is sufficiently restricted. There are no prohibitive provisions which parallel these now without jurisdiction of the United States."

When one hundred and one years later we eliminated this provision which had been included in our Revised Statutes of 1873, and extended copyright to foreign authors by striking out the words in existing law which confined this right to an author who was a citizen, we made the legal protection in the United States of a foreign author's book dependent upon the printing of that book within the United States; a requirement which is not based upon any principle of copyright and must ultimately be eliminated from our copyright legislation if this last is ever to rest upon sound principles.

The incorporation of this obligatory American manufacture of the foreign author's book brought into our legislation for the first time the restrictions upon the importation of copies of such author's own edition of his book which are contained in the copyright statutes now in force. The latest copyright bill, H. R. 10364, proposes further restrictions upon the reasonable privilege now enjoyed by every American book lover, student, teacher, and university professor to import a copy for his own use of an English author's book, by permitting such importation only when the American reprinter of the book "declines or neglects proposed in the copyright legislation of any country. They are altogether inappropriate in legislation relating to copyright.

The entry of the United States into the Copyright Union is undoubtedly the one most important forward step with respect to international copyright advancement which our country can now take. The Union was founded in 1887. The United States has held aloof for more than forty years, but there has been a gradual crystallization of opinion—at least among educated people — that our country should now become a member.

The original Convention creating an International Union for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works was formulated at various international conferences held at Berne, Switzerland. The final draft accepted and signed there on September 9, 1886, was ratified on September 5, 1887, at which date the International Copyright Union came into actual existence. This Convention of 1886 was slightly amended at a copyright conference held at Paris in 1896, and was thoroughly discussed at a conference in Berlin in 1908 where a much revised text was adopted and signed on November 13, 1908. At a conference held at Rome in 1928 further modifications were discussed, some of which were incorporated in a new text signed in that city on June 2, 1928.

Senator Hebert's copyright bill, S. 176, and Mr. Vestal's, H. R. 139, both introduced at the beginning of this session of Congress, provided directly for the adherence of the United States to the Copyright Convention of Rome of 1928. Dr. Sirovich's bill fails to provide directly for such adherence, but does provide that an alien author may obtain copyright in the United States if he be a citizen of a foreign country which grants to citizens of the United States by treaty, convention, agreement or law, "copyright on the same basis as to its own citizens," or when such country "is an adhering party to a general copyright convention to which the United States is, at the same time, an adhering party." This is substantially in agreement with existing law; but the provisions for the Presidential Copyright Proclamations declaring the existence of such reciprocal conditions have been eliminated.

It is contended that the enactment of this bill would permit the President to again submit the Copyright Convention to the Senate.

THORVALD SOLBERG,
Former Register of Copyrights.

The Faraday Medal, awarded for conspicuous services to electrical science, has been given to Sir Oliver Lodge by the Institution of Electrical Engineers.

At a recent London sale a letter written by Burns to Clarinda and a letter written by her to him fetched £1,360. A first edition of "A Christmas Carol," inscribed by Dickens, went for £480, and an eleven-page MS. of Thackeray for £780.

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The Reader's Guide

Conducted by MAY LAMBERTON BECKER

Inquiries in regard to the choice of books should be addressed to MRS. BECKER, c/o *The Saturday Review*. As for reasons of space ninety percent of the inquiries received cannot be answered in print, a stamped and addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply.

"What shall I read," says C. B. U., Washington, D. C., "between now and July in preparation for two months in France?"

IF, as I suspect, most of this is to be in Paris, begin with Edward Acheson's "Passport to Paris" (Morrow), just published and called "advice for the thrifty"—and I do believe only the thrifty really see Paris at all. Its citizens do not throw their money about and do not respect those who do. Two scenes stay in my mind as having an especially French flavor; a well-to-do French family ordering—with the active and sympathetic coöperation of the waiter—a meal in a restaurant, and a group of housewives in the Montsouris district laying in the day's provisions from street carts. Mr. Acheson's book is practical in details, and is arranged in chronological order from the time you buy your steamer ticket; it includes apartment leasing and other concerns of a longer stay.

If you cannot take lessons in conversational French, get a phonograph speaking it and play the records continuously until they soak into the mind. You will not learn to speak French by this or any other method in four months, but you will get more accustomed to hearing it, and thus avoid the first unsettling effects of a foreign language. Many of us are sickeningly homesick for the first week in Paris, if we are to stay longer. You will also save strain by learning the looks of French coins, stamps, and paper money. Clara E. Laughlin's "So You're Going to France" (Houghton Mifflin) is much admired, and beginners use it freely. "The Paris that Is Paris," by Watson White (Scribner), is a fine day by day guide to historical streets and sections. For books on national traits and characteristics, André Siegfried's "France, a Study in Nationality" (Yale) and Philip Carr's "The French at Home" (Dial) will make a beginning; I read everything I can get of this sort, and have been lately much interested in "The Civilization of France," by Ernst Robert Curtius (Macmillan), a sincere and in the main successful attempt to make Germans understand French ideals, culture, and conditions. Another interesting book by a German is "Who Are These French?" by Friedrich Sieburg (Macmillan), who was the Paris correspondent of the *Frankfurter Zeitung*.

In general, even for a short stay read as much French history as you can hope to remember, and all you can about architecture, whether of châteaux or cathedrals. Take cooking seriously; a good book to get the right idea of how to take it is "Pigs in Clover," by Frances Noyes Hart (Doubleday, Doran), in which two Americans steadily eat their way across the country, respecting this art as they would that of painting or sculpture. There is a new edition of the standard guide, "Where Paris Dines," by Julian Street (Doubleday, Doran), whose introduction is charming and whose information is sound. Use the Blue Guides (Macmillan) wherever you go, as guidebooks; they are little portable encyclopedias, light to carry and comprehensive. "French France," by Oliver Madox Hueffer (Appleton), is admirable for provincial life, while an excellent introduction to theatre, politics, and press of today will be found in Sisley Huddleton's "France and the French" (Scribner), together with much other desirable information.

Will M. N. H., San Diego Co., Cal., who asked me a number of questions and wished a personal letter, please send me his address? An addressed envelope was to have been enclosed, but it must have worked loose, and this is the only clue I have. He said, "my pen-hand now can't write," and I don't want to seem inconsiderate of one who sends me a good letter under such untoward conditions.

A. U. T., New York City, asks about a book on the theatre to give one deeply interested in the historical side of this subject and likely to have read most of the well-known works. The only complete history of the Italian theatre that has ever been written, so far as I know, has just been completed by Joseph Spencer Kennard and published in a beautiful illustrated edition by the press of William Edwin Rudge. This is "The Italian Theatre"; it is in two large volumes and goes from pagan Rome to Pirandello. The many pictures, as one might expect, are from the incomparable stage settings and costume plates in which the early Italian theatre is so rich, with portraits of later dramatists; plots are given in sufficient detail, and the theatre is woven into the life of its time. Another large, handsome volume is "The Theatre," by Sheldon Cheney (Longmans, Green), a history of acting and stagecraft for three thousand years, with many pictures; this appeared in 1929.

Two less expensive books on the stage have been lately published: "The Theatre from Athens to Broadway," by Thomas Wood Stevens (Appleton), an outline history by the director of the St. Louis Little Theatre; and a study of contemporary tendencies and performances, "Our Changing Theatre," by R. Dana Skinner (Dial), dramatic editor of *The Commonweal*, which reviews many plays, characterizes a number of actors, and considers principles as well as performances. The emphasis in the first is on production methods; in the latter on a conservative idealism. The current annual volume of "Best Plays," edited by Burns Mantle (Dodd, Mead), must be added to all equipments of this sort; this year's makes uncommonly good reading.

E. F. R., Painesville, O., asks if the poems of the Swedish poet Karlfeldt are to be had in English translation, and if the translations appearing in the Saturday Review of Literature *last Fall were by Charles Wharton Stork.* In an "Anthology of Swedish Lyrics from 1750 to 1925," published by the American-Scandinavian Foundation, thirteen of his poems appear in C. W. Stork's translation; they give a good idea of the reasons why he is to Sweden in something the position of Burns to Scotland, though of course these lyrics of Dalecarlian peasant life must suffer a sea-change in translation. Besides, the *American Scandinavian Review* printed English versions of other poems of his in October, 1920; June, 1931, and October, 1931, publishing in the last-named issue an article on Karlfeldt by Mr. Stork with other translations. Mr. Stork was the translator of the poems in the *Saturday Review* for October 24, 1931.

The revised edition of "The Nobel Prize Winners in Literature: 1901-1931," by Annie Russell Marble (Appleton), has a chapter on Karlfeldt, with a portrait and biographical sketch; this refers also to an article in the *Germanic Review*, July, 1927, and to the speech of Erik Axel Karlfeldt as Secretary of the Swedish Academy on the occasion of the award of the prize to Sinclair Lewis, printed by Harcourt, Brace. Mrs. Marble's book is one of the best manuals for women's clubs that I know; I am constantly having occasion to advise it.

E. E., St. Michaels, Md., asks for stories of St. Martin of Tours suitable to tell to children; the historical works "give the facts of his life and refer to 'many legends and stories,'" but about all she can find is the famous one of the divided cloak. Although Louis Foley's "The Greatest Saint of France" (Morehouse) is a biography for adult readers, the legends given could be readily retold, and there are more than in children's books about saints, where each saint can have comparatively little space. As I am often asked for books of this kind, here are some well-written and well-liked by young readers: "In God's Garden," by Amy Steedman (Macrae), which has sixteen color-plates from Italian masterpieces; those in "Our Island Saints" (Macrae) are all English, such as St. Alban, St. Hugh of Lincoln, and St. Cuthbert. Lucy Menzies's "Book of Saints" (Medici) has many beautiful reproductions in color; the notes include information on the artists as well as on the saints. Mrs. Andrew Lang's "Book of Saints and Heroes" (Longmans, Green) is another famous and fine collection, and another good one is Caroline Chenoweth's "Stories of the Saints" (Houghton Mifflin). William Canton's "Child's Book of Saints" (Dutton) is one of the volumes of Everyman's Library.

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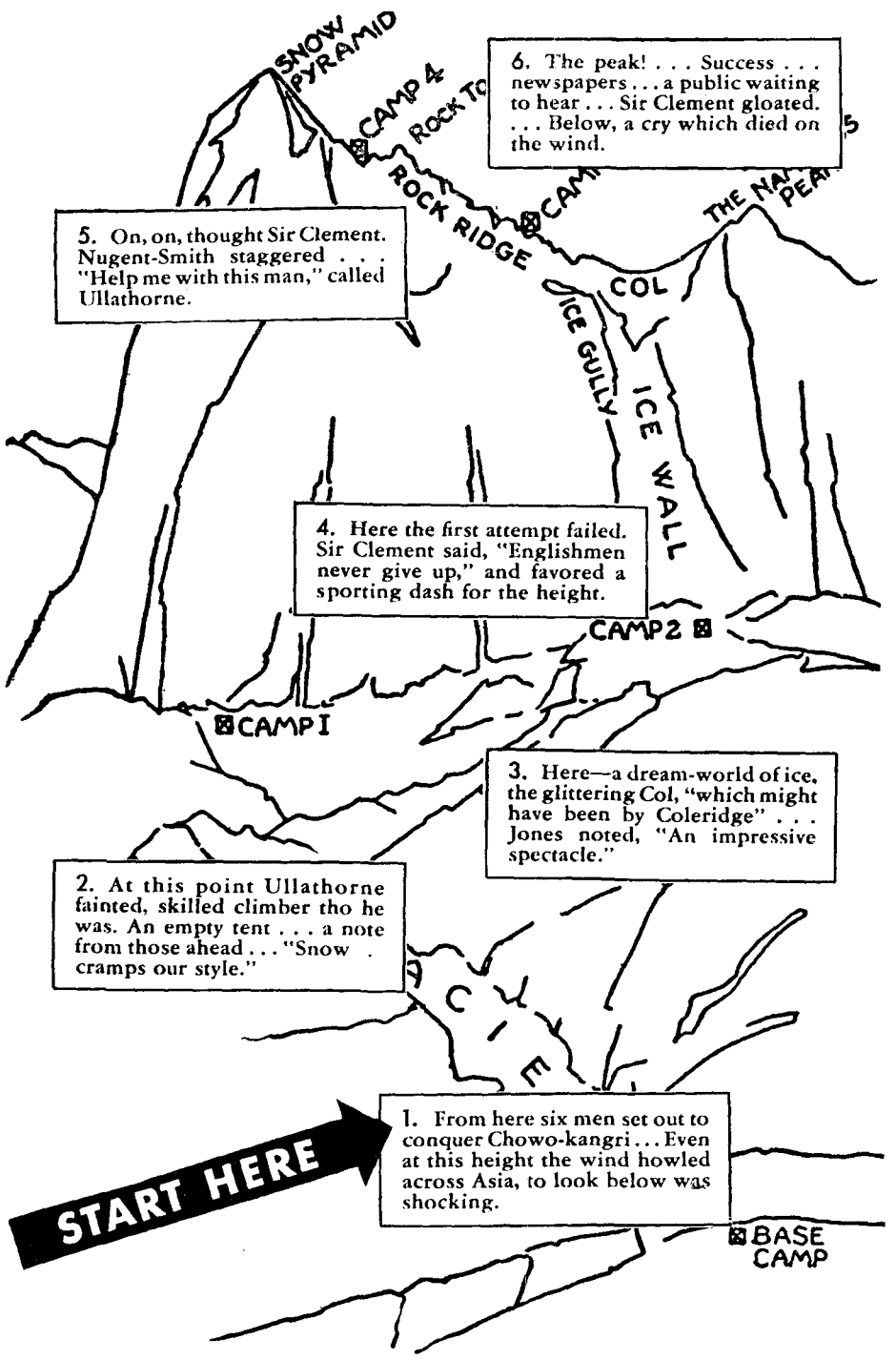
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6. The peak! . . . Success . . . newspapers . . . a public waiting to hear . . . Sir Clement gloated. . . . Below, a cry which died on the wind.
5. On, on, thought Sir Clement. Nugent-Smith staggered . . . "Help me with this man," called Ullathorne.
4. Here the first attempt failed. Sir Clement said, "Englishmen never give up," and favored a sporting dash for the height.
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ITHURIEL'S HOUR

by **JOANNA CANNAN**

The New Books

Fiction

(*Continued from page* 623)

knows the right people, molds her children to a high social, and completely de-individualized, finish, gives Dick her best coöperation, as she sees it (including a *bright smile daily* at breakfast), and no understanding whatever.

Poor Dick's efforts to meet her demands, handicapped by an almost feeble-minded desire to help everybody in sight, are complicated by the helpless existence of her sister Constance, a lovely little half-wit with a brain like a bit of bright silk fluff floating in a garden of half-childish, half-gnomic poetry. There is also Constance's sizzling Italian lover, a young man with a fine gift for romantic repartée and explosions against factory-model culture. Dick Lambert has his limitations (he is a stickler for conventional propriety, and distrusts foreigners and "eccentrics"), but his real trouble is that he is a gentleman and a Christian. He loses his family, wife, and fortune (of course, he never really could have made his money, anyhow; the author is wrong about that). The outcome is summed up by his hard-boiled brother-in-law, who loves him and despairs for him: "there's no place for a sweet guy in the modern world."

JOHN PAUL'S ROCK. By FRANK PARKER DAY. Minton, Balch. 1932. $2.

Any reader who tires of the general run of modern fiction and would welcome something totally different may be offered this book in confidence that a refreshing hour is insured. The story is far removed from modern life but does not on that account lack tensity; the style is simple, direct, often poetic; the background of the northern woods and their wild inhabitants is drawn with knowledge and appreciation. And, most important, the half-civilized Indian who in his isolation from humanity gradually reverts to the ways of his ancestors is an imaginative and picturesque figure.

A fugitive from white man's justice, John Paul, after slaying the young American who made love to his squaw, hides himself deep in the country of lakes and forests beside a huge glacial rock which becomes his watch-tower, his protector, his almost human friend. One man, an old comrade, knows John Paul's secret and visits him every spring, bringing reinforcements for the supplies of the small lonely camp. But Indians always know the woods and their resources and John Paul with this slight help soon becomes almost self-sufficient both physically and mentally. Loneliness, however, is hardest to combat in the long span of the year, and a dream world becomes his friend and salvation. Old Indian legends enter the pages as he tells them to himself for companionship in vacant hours, and these are a delightful undercurrent to the story. But they weave their spell deeply in the mind of the lone Indian on whom no other influences are now at work, and he reverts more and more to a reincarnation of his own forefathers. After six long years circumstances at last bring about his betrayal to the avenging white man, his victim's father, but the book closes with an unexpected turn which is as well executed as the rest, and John Paul dies by one of the bullets of the World War.

The author has not only done his work well but he makes clear his own love for the Indians and the North Country, and his sympathetic understanding of his subject. Small but delightful illustrations by Mabel K. Day are a pleasant introduction to each chapter.

THE DOCTOR'S DEFENSE. By *Sidney Fairway*. Kinsey. $2.

SMOKY PASS. By *Aubrey Boyd*. Dutton. $2.

THE WORLD AGAINST MARY. By *J. M. Frank*. Dutton.

WOMEN WITH NETS. By *Richard Worthington*. Brentanos. $2.

TWO STORIES. By *H. P. Blawatsky*. Madras: Theosophical Publishing House.

LADY BY CHANCE. By *Charles G. Shaw*. Macaulay. $2.

Miscellaneous

WORDS CONFUSED AND MISUSED. By MAURICE H. WESEEN. Crowell. 1932. $2.

This book by the Associate Professor of English in the University of Nebraska is a first aid book for the helpless or bewildered. Some three thousand pairs of words are defined and distinguished, such as *fetch* and *bring*, *guarantee* and *guaranty*, *especial* and *special*, etc. No doubt all this information could be disentangled from a good large dictionary, but Mr. Weseen has done a useful service in collecting, arranging, and expounding it here in an easily intelligible way.

AMERICAN GLOSSARY. By THORNTON. Dialect Notes. 1932.

Thornton's "American Glossary" was published in 1912 in two volumes. Materials for further publication were assembled by Mr. Thornton, but an opportunity to publish this matter did not arrive before his death, and for some years the manuscript has been reposing in the Widener Library at Harvard. The American Dialect Society has now begun the publication of this valuable material, and in Vol. VI, Part III of *Dialect Notes*, a section covering some one hundred pages, and extending from A. B. Papers to Dip, has been made available. This comprises about one fourth of the whole, which will constitute Vol. III of Mr. Thornton's "Glossary" when all of his material is published.

THE MARYLAND HUNT CUP. By STUART ROSE. New York: Huntington Press. 1931. $2.50 and $25.

The appearance of books on hunting has seemed to be on the increase of late: we lately noticed Mr. Higginson's "Try Back," the record of a riding man distinguished in both America and England, as well as the history of the "Grand National." Now comes a sizable volume about the Maryland Hunt Club race, as a contribution to the printed records of racing in America.

The Maryland Hunt Cup races were established in 1894 to provide a "try out" of horses for the three Maryland hunting clubs. "Purely a sporting event, and possessing no fiscal significance," as the author is happily able to state, the races have been run for over thirty-five years. This book is the first to give the history of what is admittedly the premier of American steeple-chasing events. It is divided into two parts: part I containing the narrative (intimate and horsey as it ought to be), and part II containing statistics of each of the races run to date.

The book is well printed in one of Mr. Goudy's types (Kennerley) which appears with great appropriateness on these pages. There are twenty-one pages of off-set-printed illustrations from photographs, and numerous head-pieces drawn by Gordon Ross. Mr. Ross has also made a map of the course, which appears in black and white in the trade edition and in colors in the limited.

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE SIXTH ROOT-RACE. By *C. W. Leadbetter*. Madras: Theosophical Publishing Company.

MURDERS AND MYSTERIES. By *W. Stewart Wallace*. Macmillan. $3.50.

OUR DARKTOWN PRESS. By *Inez Lopez Cohen*. Appleton. $1.

SEVENTY FATHOMS DEEP. By *'Artiglio.'* Holt. $3.

LIVING GEOGRAPHY. By *Ellsworth Huntington, C. Beverley Benson*, and *Frank M. McMurray*. Macmillan. 2 vols.

PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN SOVIET RUSSIA. By *Alice Withrow Field*. Dutton. $3.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE THEORIES AND WORKINGS OF CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. By *W. P. Kennedy*. Macmillan. $1.50.

J. C. SQUIRE *says—*

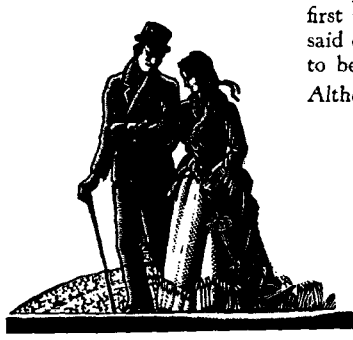
"Quite unobtrusively a first-rate prose-writer has stepped upon the scene. I don't think that anyone alive, writing in English, has written a more beautiful novel than Kate O'Brien's *Without My Cloak*."

From the Editor of *The London Mercury* this is high praise, highly deserved. *Without My Cloak*, published last December, was a choice of the English Book Society, became England's favorite novel at Christmas, and has sold there more than 22,000 copies.

Compton Mackenzie found it "the most beautiful first novel since *Dusty Answer*." J. B. Priestley said of its author, "She seems designed by nature to be a really good novelist."

Although now in a third large printing—and steadily gaining in appreciation, the reception of this book in America has been less spectacular than abroad. Nevertheless, a treat here lies in store for a good many fortunate people. We hope you will be another of those to discover it; if you do, you will be greatly rewarded.

Rich in Shakespearean idiom—as long and as glamorous as *Broome Stages*—this is the story of a Victorian Irish family, who for romance and tragedy, says one critic, will take a permanent place beside the Forsytes.



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by Kate O'Brien

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Horoscope

LUDWIG LEWISOHN'S "Expression in America" has already been accorded in these pages the tribute due so distinguished a performance. I feel that it merits particularized comment in this department because of the incisiveness and inclusiveness of its appraisals of contemporary American literature, and because of the value of those appraisals to the specialized requirements of the book collector. A reader's first cultural duty is to the literature of his own day, and frequently he will translate his awareness of this obligation into the acquisition of modern first editions. To the collector, of course, the term modern is of temporal signification only; it embraces roughly (at least for the purpose of the present discussion) a period from the publication of Stephen Crane's "Maggie" in 1893 up to this morning. And Mr. Lewisohn's comprehensive panorama extends at least to last night.

The chief value of "Expression in America" to the collector is that, whether Mr. Lewisohn's premises are sound or fallacious, whether his conclusions are to the mark or woefully beside it, he has produced a book that someone not gifted with the vision of a Cassandra indubitably could have—would have—written a hundred years from now. It is today's nearest possible approach to that wisdom after the event which every collector of the moderns seeks to achieve by the exercise of his own critical judgment and with the help of such casual spoor and blazings as mark the trail of hunted and hunter, creator and critic, in the populous jungle of letters.

Occasionally Mr. Lewisohn vouchsafes definite prophecy. "'Sister Carrie' and 'The Spoon River Anthology' and 'Babbitt,'" he writes, "will probably not burden drawing-room tables in the year 2000. It is safe to assert that the historian of our civilization will be profoundly mindful of them and of what, for their time and therefore for the future, they wrought and accomplished." Not often, of course, does he present so sharply focussed a forecast—Mr. Lewisohn, after all, is not editing a *Daily Running Horse* for the great American literary sweepstakes.

The collector of the books of contemporary and nearly contemporary authors—and, one might almost add, of not quite yet contemporary authors, so hot sometimes grows the pursuit—must have the courage of his convictions. He must, at any rate, have the courage, and his activities will be futile unless he has at least some shadow of conviction—and it must be his own conviction before anyone's else. In order to acquire conviction he will first of all read the books he collects, and having thus made a sample valuation, he will check it against such critical data as may be available. Often he will be unable to find any, which will add both to the difficulty and to the pleasure of the game which he is playing. He will evaluate this critical data exactly as he evaluates the object of it. But his own summation must always be his supreme court.

It is unnecessary, therefore, for the collector of the moderns to accept Mr. Lewisohn's study as rigorously and slavishly as he would accept the Infantry Drill Regulations if he were "going for to be a soldier." He need not accept, for instance, Mr. Lewisohn's insistent iteration that a boy's best friend is his mother, the stress on the *inzest motiv*, the frequent lugging in of sundry German nineteenth and twentieth century writers who may be household words in Hanover and Hoboken but most certainly are not on Park Avenue or even, perhaps, on Morningside Heights. But once the worst has been said, and even if that worst were far worse than it is, "Expression in America" would still remain the most useful critical guide available to the collector of modern firsts.

No one, certainly, will fail to discover in it several pronouncements which he will not accept with enthusiasm. For myself, I rejoice to find in a three century survey of American literature no fewer than seven of six hundred pages devoted to a finely sympathetic and penetrating delineation of the work of William Vaughn Moody. I rejoice to find the Dreiser equation satisfactorily balanced and containing a plenitude of plus signs, despite the inevitable minus quantity in it (never better put than by Mr. Lewisohn) that "he is the worst writer of his eminence in the entire history of literature," and to rehear the conclusion that Frank Norris wrote much but wrote only "McTeague," which was enough.

"Expression in America" is not, of course, a collector's manual in the sense of being a guide book of modern first editions, a check list of American literature from William Bradford to William Faulkner. An abundance of such chartable data is already available. Mr. Lewisohn is not a dirt bibliographer—this is the last claim he would think of asserting for himself. But it is not unfair to point out some of the annoying little textual errors with which the book abounds—errors that come to be of surpassing importance when the book is considered, as it is here being considered, as a collector's vade-mecum. "Smollet," "Calverly," and "The Bigelow Papers" (thrice thus) are unforgivable—so are "Henry Merton Lyons" for Harris Merton Lyon (though it is good to have him mentioned, even under an alias), "Looking Backwards," "The American Tragedy," "Marco's Millions," and, worst of all, "Edward" Arlington Robinson, who so appears twice, a fault for which the proper rendering of his name, also twice, can hardly condone. The poet in "Babbitt" is a Mr. Frink, not Frick, and dear, old-fashioned readers of "Nicholas Nickleby" will readily recognize the Crummleses in Mr. Lewisohn's Crumelses and, even more readily, Morlena Kenwigs in Morleena Kenwigs—an error which may seem trivial, yet Dickens made much of this particular name: "It may here be remarked that it had been invented and composed by Mrs. Kenwigs, previous to her first lying-in, for the special distiction of her eldest child, in case it should prove a daughter." The mining (rather than engineering) treatise which Herbert Hoover translated was originally published in the sixteenth and not the seventeenth century, and Mrs. Hoover had enough to do with the translation to merit at least footnote reference. Publication of Franklin's autobiography took place in 1791, not 1771—it is Mr. Lewisohn's ill luck that he used the definite "publication," because composition of the autobiography did actually begin in the year he specified. Henry Adams's "Democracy" was published in 1880, not 1879, and the definitive publication of "Sister Carrie" was in 1907, not 1908 (assuming, of course, that one ignores the rather pretty problem as to whether "Sister Carrie" was actually published in 1900). A searching eye would be able to make numerous additions to this list of footfaults. The text should be painstakingly ransacked by some unerrable proofreader, and his findings embodied in a "second and best edition" which every book collector and every rare bookseller, for his own good and his own enjoyment, should keep on his handiest reference shelf. J. T. W.

Notes

THE King's Printer's Editions (issued in London by Eyre & Spottiswode and in America by the Viking Press) are to be enriched by an important six volume set of the Letters of Lord Chesterfield, to be published this month. This is announced as the first edition to approach completeness, since it includes some 1,400 letters which have never been published before out of a total of 2,600. There will be a full bibliography, a note on Chesterfield's orthography, and a long Life. The editorship is in the hands of Bonamy Dobrée. This promises to be an important addition to the history of the eighteenth century, and to displace all collections of Chesterfield material. Three hundred and fifty copies are available for the United States at $50 the set.

The Limited Editions Club has recently printed for distribution to its members "The Ideal Book. Two Essays jointly awarded the Prize offered . . . for the best Essay. . . ," by Francis P. Dill and Porter Garnett. Two bindings have been put on the 48-page pamphlet—paper covers and paper boards. It has been printed by the Walpole Printing Office in the new Linotype Janson type. The essays are written by Mr. Garnett and by one of his pupils—a coincidence which could not have been foreseen by the judges, but which makes more prominent the excellence of the work of the Laboratory Press, where Mr. Garnett has interpreted and emphasized his ideals for many years. "The Ideal Book" is a dry subject, and has been pretty completely handled before this by Morris and Cobden-Sanderson and others. Yet I would suggest the reading of Mr. Garnett's essay in particular because he is a clear writer and a competent one, and what he says is wholly in the right direction—dealing with fundamentals as it ought.

In the *New Yorker* for February 20 there is an essay called "fpafm" which you can file under "Facetiæ." It deals with the old fashioned "long s" in some railroad literature picked up in a dining car. It is good fun—but probably will not be understood by one American publisher who issued a book a few years ago in which the long s was used throughout in place of the f. R.

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GENERAL

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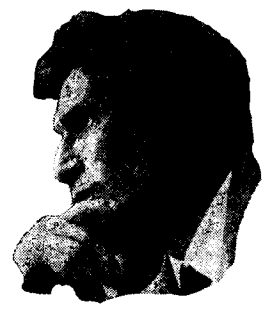

JOHN COWPER POWYS: *his is an invocation to the primordial wells of deep delight.*

On Thursday, March 24th, the *Inner Sanctum* publishes the first novel by JOHN COWPER POWYS since *Wolf Solent*—a one-volume work of eleven hundred and seventy-four pages entitled *A Glastonbury Romance.*

Glory came to JOHN COWPER POWYS by slow and steady strides. The spectacular success of *Wolf Solent* simply consolidated a fame that had been quietly mounting for two decades. But the heights of world renown made no change in the brooding and solitary grandeur of "an author without a telephone," an author who subscribes to no clipping service, keeps no scrap book, retains no literary agent, clamors for no sales reports, makes no "contacts," attends no literary teas—an author whose sole destiny it is to compose from an inner necessity that cannot be denied, an author who writes as he speaks, like a man possessed, an author who dares to fling a massive and impassioned defiance at the literary fashions of our time.

For three years JOHN COWPER POWYS has been fashioning *A Glastonbury Romance* in that spirit—and the result is the most ambitious creation of his entire career. "There's a lot of very direct simple old-fashioned melodrama in *A Glastonbury Romance,*" he explains in a letter to *The Inner Sanctum,* "just as there is in my own favorite books, *King Lear, David Copperfield, The Possessed,* and *Wuthering Heights.* . . . I have dared to follow my admired master GOETHE in gathering up and driving forward, as he does in the second part of *Faust,* a vast crowd of mythological influences toward a quite definite mystical and philosophical end."

Vast as it was, *Wolf Solent* was considerably smaller than *A Glastonbury Romance.* In 1929 *Wolf Solent* was published—and became an outstanding best seller—at five dollars. Now this larger novel—and in the prejudiced judgment of *The Inner Sanctum* an even more glorious achievement—is offered at $3.75. Because of this extraordinary circumstance, an advance announcement is now made before publication to the friends of *The Inner Sanctum.* Reservations for first-edition copies of *A Glastonbury Romance* will be honored in order of their receipt, by your own book-seller or by

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The PHŒNIX NEST

WE are so full of our own affairs at the moment, having just got married, that whatever readers we have will pardon us if the column this week assumes a slightly jittery aspect. We shall do the best we can. . . .

Louis Untermeyer writes us from Clearwater, Florida, that he is finishnig his lecture tour among alligators and alligator pears, native sons and native sunshine, with flowers furnished by the National Hibiscus Company. He is at Sea Ora Lodge down there, till April 15th. . . .

The Modern Editions Press has sent us an announcement of its first Pamphlet series. They hope to continue publishing these series, each booklet containing one short story or small group of poems. They are eager to read manuscripts of this type from young and even unknown authors. Their address is 725 Greenwich St., New York City. The booklets in these series will be sold by subscription and through bookstores. They hope later to be able to bring out a few books a year in limited editions. Pamphlet Series One includes the names of *Dudley Fitts, Kay Boyle,* and *Raymond Ellsworth Larsson.* . . .

A complete report of *Alexander Meikeljohn's* Experimental College at the University of Wisconsin will be published by Harper & Brothers this spring. The Experimental College was started five years ago by Mr. Meikeljohn and *Glenn Frank,* the President of the University of Wisconsin, under the auspices of the university. It was founded for the purpose of liberalizing and humanizing educational methods and for revitalizing liberal education. Drastic changes were made in the course of study and the method of teaching. The Report will tell the whole story of the experiment which created violent comment from the day it was started. . . .

We have been hearing a deal recently concerning a novel called "The Running Footman," by one *John Owen,* an Englishman, author of "The Shepherd and the Child" and "Many Captives." English reviewers have waxed enthusiastic concerning "The Running Footman." Macmillan has just published the book over here. Since such a feat as Turpin's ride to York—and he had a horse!—the footman's run, which threatens to become classic, bids for a place among the famous races of fiction. According to its admirers, "The Running Footman" is the very essence of the true romance. . . .

An unusual new volume is *Cyril Hume's* "Myself and the Young Bowman" brought out by Doubleday, Doran. It contains six stories and seventeen poems. The edition is limited to one thousand copies printed from type since distributed. It is Hume's first book in over three years. A particular story in it which is a most beautiful bit of writing is entitled "Forrester." . . .

Duffield & Green have made an engaging book of *Earl Chapin May's* "The Circus from Rome to Ringling." The circus is a great and thoroughly American institution, and most of us as small boys have crawled under a tent or two in our time. The publication date of the book is the end of this month, and recently at Mr. Green's home an afternoon party was thrown in honor of Mr. May, its author. . . .

The volumes in Liveright's Black and Gold Library, hitherto priced at $3.50 each volume, have had their price reduced to $2 a volume. The only other change in the books is a substitution of coated black dust covers, stamped in gold and approximating the actual appearance of the familiar binding beneath, for the slip covers and cellophane wrappers which have been in use for the past few years. . . .

The publishing house of Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith has been busy changing its name to Jonathan Cape & Robert Ballou, Inc. As Vice President, *Robert Ballou,* Treasurer of Jonathan Cape & Harrison Smith, Inc., since its inception three years ago and former literary critic of the *Chicago Daily News,* will act as General Manager. *Charles A. Ackerman* is named as Secretary. *Margaret Cheney Dawson* continues as Mr. Ballou's editorial assistant, and *Muriel Cameron Bodkin* as advertising and publicity director. . . .

esh writes us:

Have you ever read *Edith O'Shaughnessy's* "Viennese Medley"? I am simply astonished at the few people who even know of this novel, and I wish you would do something to make it better known. It would be a shame if Edith O'Shaughnessy should have to wait, like dear *Mary Webb,* until she dies before people know about this exquisite novel which she wrote, I should say, about 1924. Even so well read a person as *St. John Ervine* did not know of it until a few months ago, and then he took up a whole page in *Time and Tide* to praise the book. "Viennese Medley" is written with infinite tenderness, and the chief character is a woman who will always remain in the minds of the readers of the book. It is a daring thing to say, but I think that "Viennese Medley" is one of the outstanding books of our time. It is not, so far as I know, published in this country, but Jonathan Cape (30 Bedford Square, London) publishes it in the Travellers' Library for three-six, which is, at the present rate of exchange, only about sixty-five cents. If you have not read this perhaps you will let me send you a copy. I should be glad to do so. Just put a little insert in your column—"esh," please send me a copy—and then I am sure that you will want to write quite a bit about it for your readers.

Well, *esh,* please do! . . .

A new novel by *Isa Glenn,* "East of Eden," will be published in June by Alfred A. Knopf. Miss Glenn writes now of a celebrated woman novelist and exercises her incisive irony upon New York's literati. Miss Glenn has steadily advanced as a novelist and today occupies an enviable position as one of the leading writers of fiction in this country. . . .

Hip hooray for "The Supernatural Omnibus," edited by *Montague Summers,* published by Doubleday, Doran, and contributed to by such writers as *Ambrose Bierce, Bram Stoker, Arthur Machen, Max Beerbohm,* and elder favorites! It was an omnibus volume that badly needed to be done, and the choice of editorship was excellent. . . .

Grace Hegger Lewis, the first wife of *Sinclair Lewis,* has just returned from a long stay in Arizona where she visited her son, *Wells Lewis.* She has almost finished her second novel which will be published by Liveright, Inc., in the Fall. . . .

F. J. Schleck has sent us, from the College of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota, a number of clippings concerning the late *Oscar W. Firkins.* Firkins was a legend in Minnesota for a great many years, says Mr. Schleck, and goes on to say in part:

> The first work of his I read was the essay on O. Henry, which *Christopher Morley* included in his first volume of "Modern Essays." His comments and those of the instructor in charge of the course in which we were using the book led me to take graduate work under Firkins later at the University of Minnesota. I found him to be, not only the great critic he had been described, but also an intensely lovable human being. No one who had ever come into contact with him could help but feel his death as a personal loss.

Professor Firkins was a favorite contributor to *The Saturday Review of Literature.* He died on March 7th, only four months before he was to retire from the University, where he was head of the Department of Comparative Literature. We ourself cherish the warmest personal feeling for his memory as years ago, in the old *Nation,* he reviewed our earliest volume of poems. Firkins was a scholar and a gentleman, a critic of the highest integrity, and a great teacher. . . .

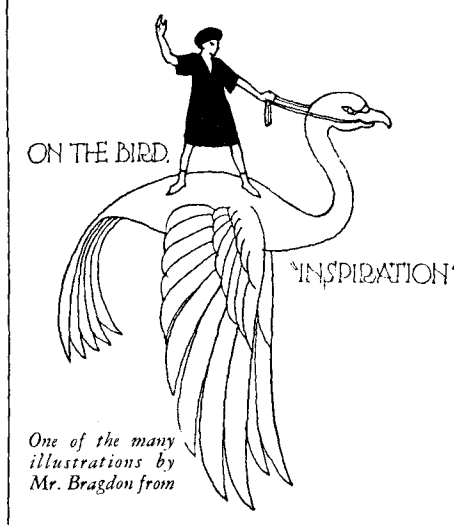
Did a presidential year affect comment on *Don Marquis's* play, "The Dark Hours," when it was referred to recently in the press, upon its production by the University Players at the Maryland Theatre in Baltimore, as "The Dark Horse"? . . .

Henry C. Rowland is an old romancer and a great adventurer, the latest of whose many novels, "Many Mansions," is published by Ray Long & Richard Smith. He recalls that his first literary effort was a book manuscript written at the age of eight, bound by himself, and still preserved. This work was entitled "The Privateer," and its opening lines were:

> It was midnight on the Broad Waters of the Atalantic, and the gallunt ship Tigeress lay Still. There was no noise save the trickul of the waves as they dashed against the hull of the Vessle.

The book had a simple preface which read, "This is a very good book and interusting. It may be read by all Members of the Famly."

THE PHŒNICIAN.



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